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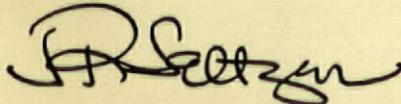


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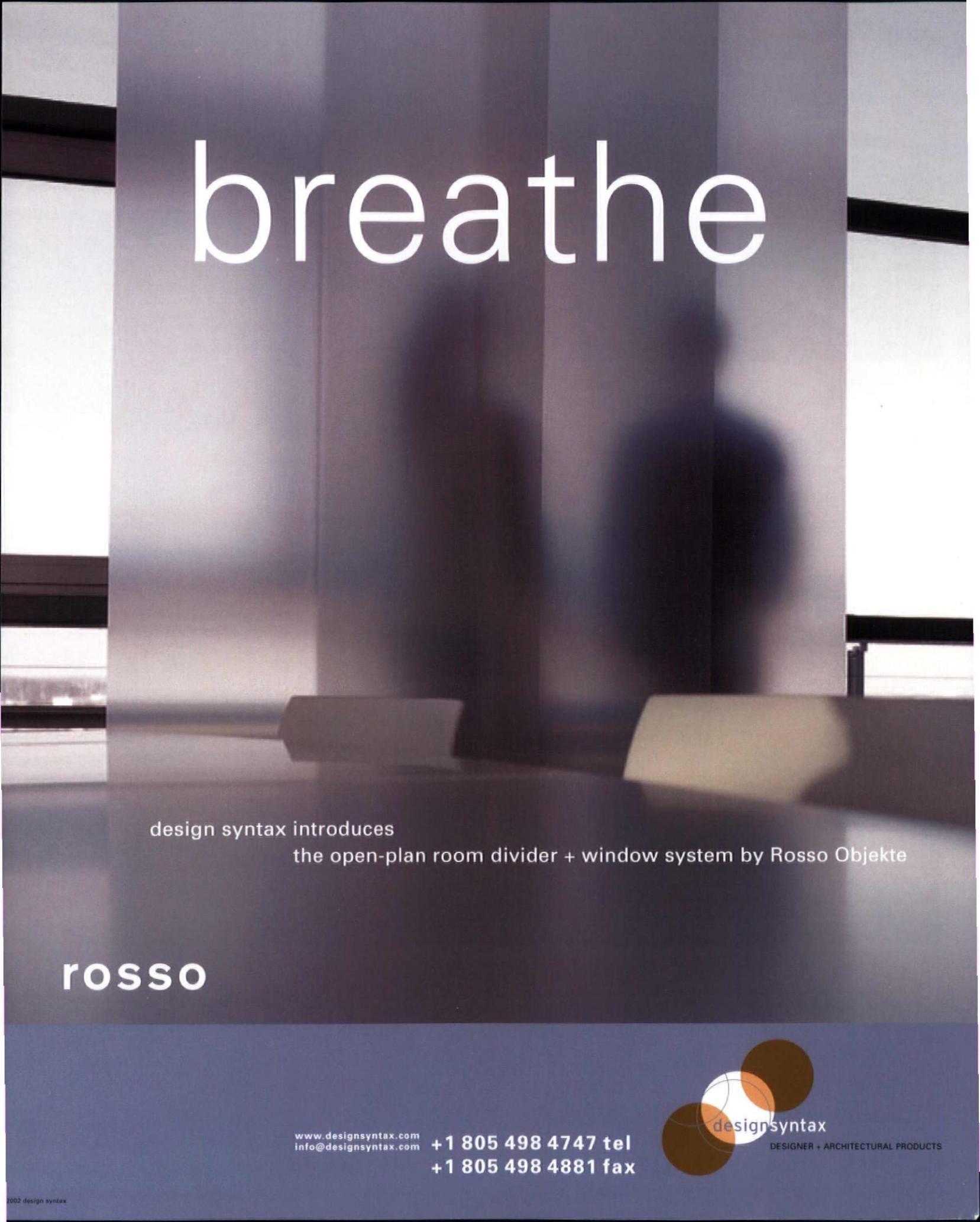
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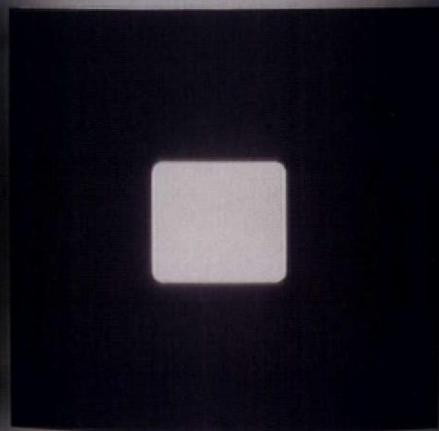
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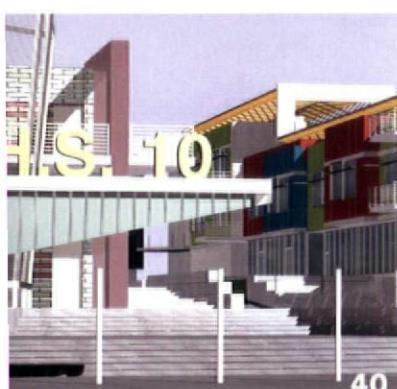
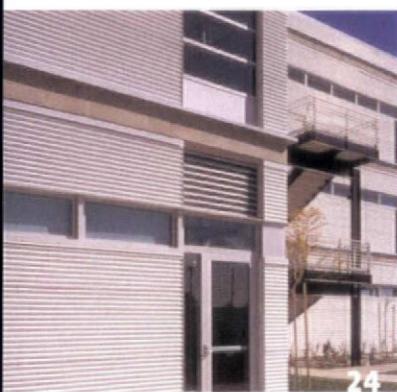


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editor's chat

ON ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN WITH PETER DI SABATINO



From the unraveling of the LAUSD's knot of future construction to the resurgence of a Case Study Program, education is the topic of the day—and this issue. In lieu of an editorial, I decided to have a quiet chat with Peter Di Sabatino, Chair of the Environmental Design Department at Art Center College of Design, Pasadena. Most readers are aware of environmental design as a new discipline, but what exactly does it bring to the contemporary design scene and how does it integrate into the overall mix of architectural education? Are we apprehensive, or do we invite it to dinner? Peter explains:

LH: So, shall we talk about your beloved environmental design?

PDS: That sounds great—as a department?

LH: Yes, and in general, as a discipline. What defines environmental design and how does that transfer into an educational program?

PDS: I guess the largest point is the overarching idea of environmental design, and how we determine it as a discipline that explores and practices the design of environments. At Art Center we are looking at the design of anything that constitutes an environment. So in terms of a normative spectrum, it includes furniture and furnishings, interiors, buildings and architecture, landscape and urbanism.

LH: How does this definition compare to what environmental design was at its inception?

PDS: It came out of the late 60's early 70's. Part of its initial concept had to do with issues of environmentalism as well as a kind of a questioning and restructuring of the academic configuration and disciplinary isolation—sort of what we are faced with again. It also brings up the issue of responsible design or what others might call sustainable or green design. What we are doing at Art Center, in terms of responsible design, is pushing it to the position of being like an ether in the department, that it becomes a matter of fact as opposed to a focused area of coursework, so that it doesn't become marginalized—it is a given.

LH: We've talked before about other institutions that use the term environmental design as an umbrella that encompasses a department of architecture, department of landscape architecture, department of urban planning, etc. Your approach to environmental design seems more transcendent, as if the boundaries are melted away. Essentially, it becomes a more European way of educating.

PDS: Yes, Italy is the best example—a student of architecture is actually more a student of design, with a focus on architecture. What we are doing at Art Center is consciously NOT creating separate departments. Instead, we are looking at the overlaps, or more importantly, the transcendence of those disciplines. Also, because of Art Center's [overall curriculum] and the interests of myself, the faculty and the students, we run laterally with environmental art in terms of installations, particularly public art and earthworks. We also run laterally with environmental graphics—when graphics become of such a magnitude or significance that they greatly effect or define the environment. Las Vegas is probably the easiest and most obvious example. And then there are digital environments, or other non-physical environments, such as film and video. This is when it gets to its fullest spectrum, when it is the physical and non-physical: virtually anything that constitutes an environment. There are always a percentage of students who are working in various scales, in various typologies. We have students who are very interested in production design and film and theater. Others are interested in the

more intimate level of furniture and interiors, and still others pivot around the architectural aspects of environmental design and then toward larger urban environments. Ideally, we are graduating people that can fluidly and fluently navigate this scale of environments, and these types of environments, in terms of design.

LH: Since a majority of our readers are architects or work in related design fields, how does environmental design differ in its approach to the environment? What is the relationship of environmental design to architecture, as we know it?

PDS: It is important to point out that the professional world in fact has shifted. What a large number of architects are doing is way beyond the design of buildings, professionally. Many architects are finding themselves working in graphics, in production design, in landscape, in product design. The poster child of this would be the Eames. The fact that architecture has always been able to claim the Eames is perhaps because there hasn't always been another discipline that was able to say, wait a second, they aren't really yours. They are, in fact, an excellent example of environmental designers, in that they worked in film, product, buildings, landscapes, and urbanism. They navigated the terrain of design more so than simply as a narrow band of architecture as building. So did Corbusier, and so did Aalto. The Eames were designing environments. And their films created environments, or showed us environments in another way. They taught us how to see. That is what I think is going on pro-

See "EDITOR'S CHAT": continued on page 12 >>



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Editorial Offices: 818-956-5313; Fax 818-956-5904. E-mail: laura@balconypress.com. Address: 512 E. Wilson, Suite 306, Glendale, CA 91206.

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contributors

LEIGH CHRISTY graduated with a B.S. in Architecture from The University of Michigan and obtained her M.Arch from The University of California, Berkeley. She worked for architectural firms in New York City and San Francisco before moving to Los Angeles, where she is now a Designer for John Friedman Alice Kimm Architects.

ALLISON MILIONIS is an Oregon-raised freelance writer based in Los Angeles, with a varied background in the arts and architecture. She is a regular contributor to a Russian architecture and design magazine, and a US correspondent for *AW Architecture + Competitions*, Germany. She is working on her first novel.

MORRIS NEWMAN, former editor of *LA Architect*, is currently writing about business, design and planning for numerous publications, including *GRID*, *Landscape Architecture*, *Los Angeles Times*, *The New York Times* and *California Planning & Development Report*. He lives in Studio City with his wife, *LA Times* reporter Sharon Bernstein, and their four children.

LISA ROSEN is a freelance writer living in Los Angeles. She is a regular contributor to *LA Architect*.

TIBBY ROTHMAN is a freelance writer and has chronicled the inner workings of Pugh+Scarpa for the firm's web site. She currently writes about architects, artists and skateboarders for *VENICEpaper*.

MICHAEL WEBB was born in London and has lived in Los Angeles for 24 years. He is the author of 18 books, including *Modernism Reborn: Mid Century American Houses*, *Richard Sapper, Through the Windows of Paris*, *Architecture + Design LA* and *Architects House Themselves*. Besides reviewing books and exhibitions for *LA Architect*, Michael is a regular contributor to *Architectural Digest*, *The New York Times*, *Domus* and other American and overseas magazines.

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EDITOR'S CHAT: Continued from page 6 >>

fessionally, not just with architecture, but also with other professions in other disciplines. There seems to be a growing trend for the blurring or overlapping or eradication of professional boundaries, and this has ramifications towards how we teach. I think what is interesting about the term environmental design, is it immediately gets to qualitative issues instead of quantitative issues, or in addition to quantitative issues. When you talk about an environment you immediately start thinking about the sound of the environment, the quality of light and the quality of materials—phenomenological and experiential aspects of the environment, as well as the measure of the environment, the proportion and functionality of the environment.

LH: You brought up the fact that the number of people applying for licensing in architecture in California is drastically down. How does this relate to your educational program?

PDS: It is not like the schools of architecture and design are not graduating people, so what is it? In terms of the education of an architect, or even the definition of an architect or architecture, I

think that what we are doing is posing another way of seeing design, and design, in this case, of environments—especially in the state of California, where technically you don't have to graduate from a professional program in order to become a licensed architect. What we are doing actually is not in relation to or response to a school of architecture. Our benchmark isn't architecture. It is just one of the points in the spectrum of design. So it isn't about a confrontation to architecture, or a turning from architecture or a response to architecture. It is simply that this is what we are trying to do, or rather; this is what we are doing.

LH: So, Peter, what is the essence of all this? What do your students take with them that is unique?

PDS: The department and the work of the department are founded on multiplicity and simultaneity. These are two key words—the students are doing multiple things, simultaneously. Studios and educational experiences are designed to integrate fully from the conception of a studio to a variety of majors. So studios are

designed to help students have an exposure to each other's disciplinary processes, methods, technologies, and outcomes. And what that produces, in terms of what they do with this degree and their work, is that because of that multiplicity and simultaneity, and the skills and talents that are achieved, they find they can do a variety of things. They have so many more options open to them in terms of employment or their own practice. The students are finding positions in the full spectrum of environmental design. One of the things that we found when talking to people in the professional community, industry and our alumni was the fact that in this day it is not sufficient that a designer only speak one language. Speaking more than one design language, just like speaking more than one verbal language, has enormous benefits. So that analogy holds. If somebody can speak French, Spanish, Italian, German, or Chinese, they are better off navigating the world. Environmental design is not the dilution of language; it is in fact an enhancement of language. Rather than saying it is too broad, one makes it in such a way that the breadth becomes its strength. ■



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Firms

Architect Christopher C. Martin, FAIA, CEO of **AC Martin Partners**, was recently appointed to the position of Commissioner on the Los Angeles Civic Center Authority, emphasizing the firm's historic commitment to Downtown LA. Three of the firm's projects (Flintridge Preparatory School, Los Angeles City Hall and Popovich Hall at the University of Southern California) have won a total of 11 awards this year, notably an American Architecture Award from the Chicago Athenaeum for Flintridge Preparatory. Also on the awards circuit, **Cannon Design** was honored with three 2002 Outstanding Sports Facilities awards from the National Intramural Recreational Sports Association. The facilities honored were the Fritz B. Burns Recreation Center at Loyola Marymount University (LA), the Freeman Center at Christopher Newport University (VA), and the Student Recreation Center at the Washington State University (WA). **KPRS Construction Service** has been awarded the bid for the construction of **WWCOT** North Valley Area Police Station (Mission Hills). WWCOT was also selected to design the new Development & Community Services Building for the City of Burbank. 71 year old **Continental Graphics**, a popular reprographic and microfilm company, has completed its merge with **The Boeing Company** and has relocated from LaBrea to Cypress.

People

Christopher Waterman, anthropologist and musician, has been appointed Acting Dean of the **UCLA School of the Arts and Architecture**, while a national search for a permanent dean is initiated. **Richard Frinier** was honored with the 2002 Industrial Design Excellence Award from the Industrial Designers Society of America for his "Riviera" Collection created for Brown Jordan. Kate Diamond, FAIA, has joined **RNL Design** as Design Principal for their Los Angeles office. **Cannon Design's** Simon Y. Park, AIA, has been promoted to Associate Vice President; Timothy M. Rommel, AIA, RAIC was named Principal. Ignatius Chau, AIA and Timothy Lambert, AIA were named Principals at **Rossetti Associates**. Roy L. Follmuth, P. E. is now Senior Director of Special Projects and Jesus Fondevila becomes Vice President and Managing Principal of **Leo A. Daly**. **WWCOT** welcomes William E. Brintnall, AIA, as Senior Associate and the new Director of Healthcare. Michael M.S. Chun, AIA, was elected to the position of Chairman of **Wimberly Allison Tong & Goo**.



Larry Underhill Photography

P.A.T.H. to Caring

After 17 years of providing transitional housing, job training and assistance to more than 10,000 homeless people annually, P.A.T.H (People Assisting the Homeless) has a new regional facility in Hollywood. Designed by Jeffrey M. Kalban of **Kalban & Associate** the Center functions much like a contemporary mall, where homeless can 'shop' for services. The 98-bed transitional housing facility provides health, educational, legal, job and social services under one roof.

Steven Holl Receives Natural History Commission

New York architect Steven Holl was selected to partner with the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County on a multiyear, multiphase project that will combine new construction with historic preservation. The completion of the Master Plan for the new Museum is projected for 2003, with the schematic design slated for 2004, groundbreaking in 2006 and a projected first-phase completion date of 2009. Five firms were short listed for the competition. Besides Holl there were David Chipperfield Architects (London), Foster & Partners (London), Herzog & de Meuron (Basel), Machado and Silvetti Associates (Boston). The 1913 original beaux-arts building (to be completely restored) was designed by Hudson and Munsell. From 1924 to 1927 the Museum added a foyer and four diorama halls by 33 architects including Myron Hunt, Edwin Bergstrom and Pierpont Davis. In 1965, the art division moved to Hancock Park to become the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

A Place Called Home

Lorcan O'Herlihy Architects has been selected as the architect for a new 40,000 square-foot Youth/Performing Arts Center called A Place Called Home, a nonprofit youth center located in South Central Los Angeles. Providing at-risk youth 9 to 20 years old with mentoring and a secure, positive environment, the center's design draws inspiration from the jazz music that originated from the area in the 1940s.



Red Plans

The MTA has selected developers Ira Yellin, Dan Rosenfeld and Paul Keller of **Urban Partners** and the architectural team of **Arquitectonica** to build a mixed-use development on the Metro Red Line site at Wilshire Boulevard and Vermont Avenue in Koreatown. The MTA Joint Development Project will include residential apartments, a LAUSD middle school, an intermodal transit plaza and underground parking.

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Photo by Gary Krueger



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Exhibition + Fellowship

SCI-Arc (Southern California Institute of Architecture) continues its series of lectures and exhibitions entitled "Make it New". Lecturers include Raimund Abraham, Preston Scott Cohen, Michael Sorkin and Wolf Prix. An exhibition/installation by Xefirotarch (principal Hernan Diaz-Alonso) runs until October 27 followed by Michele Sae (November 14-January 3, 03). For lecture information call 213-613-2200.

"Mixed Feelings: Art and Culture in the Post-Border Metropolis", shown at the **USC Fisher Gallery** through December 7, is an exhibition of commissioned work by 15 artists engaged in dialogue on the altered social conditions of the borderlands between California and Baja. Billed as "...the space where Aztec, Mestizo-tech and high tech come together", the work engages elements of both the hard and soft city; the material reality of the built environment and the mental construct we erect to make sense of those surroundings. www.usc.edu/fishergallery or 213-740-4561

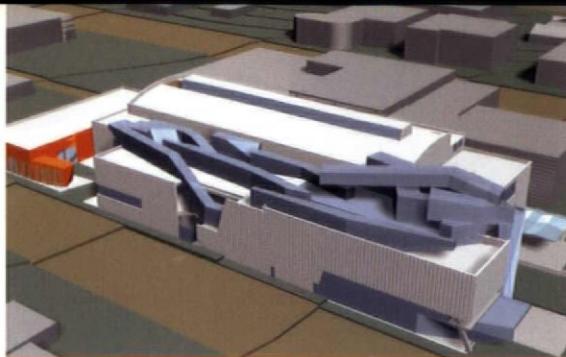
Application packets are available for the 2003 **Loeb Fellowship** sponsored by the Harvard Design School. The fellowship provides a year of independent study for mid-career professionals who have practiced for a minimum of five years, have a record of exemplary work, and who are identified as emerging leaders by their peers. Applicants may work in architecture, landscape architecture, urban planning, and urban design, as well as journalism, fine arts, nonprofit administration and public service. loeb_fellowship@gsd.harvard.edu or 617-495-9345.

The **Masters of Architecture** Lecture series hosted by AIA/LA presents a talk by Helmut Jahn, FAIA, President and CEO of Murphy/Jahn in Chicago. The lecture takes place at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Bing Theater (5909 Wilshire Blvd.) on Thursday October 3, 6:30 pm. Information: www.ailosangeles.org or 213-639-0777

Correction:



We publish an architecture magazine and fail to credit architects? One of our pet peeves around this office is reading news about a building or project only to find no mention of the architect. So, horror on horror, we discovered that WE did not credit **Koning Eizenberg Architecture** as the architects for Andre Balazs' Downtown Standard Hotel as well as the Avalon Hotel and executive architect for the Mondrian. String us by our toes! And apologies to Hank and Julie. —LH



Weaving Education Into The Urban Fabric

Reflecting a core belief in the integration of institution and community, **Art Center College of Design** has begun Phase 1 of its South Campus project with the acquisition of the Dacor Company building (on Raymond Avenue, the old 1940s Douglas Aircraft testing facility). The architectural firm **Daly Genik** is leading a two-step renovation that will eventually accommodate the school's community education programs including Art Center at Night, which enrolls more than 3,000 extension students. The South Campus is projected to include the Glenarm Power Plant (exhibition space), student housing, an office tower and museum.

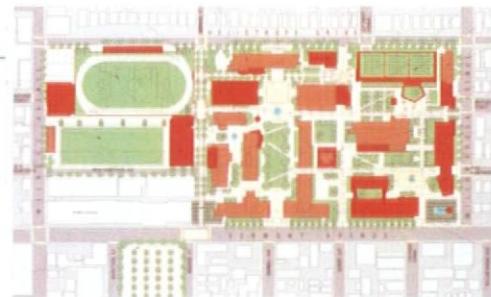
AIA Academic Summit

The Board of Directors of the AIA/LA hosted its second annual Academic Summit on April 23rd with the heads of all eight local architecture and environmental design programs. Its purpose was to foster a continued dialogue (begun last year) between the academic community and the Institute. The topic of the summit: how the two groups might work together towards their mutual benefit.

Given that many of Los Angeles' design educators are also practitioners, the summit's main topic was, "what more can the Institute offer the academic sector?" The question was answered by a positive response to the programs already implemented as a result of the first annual Academic Summit. These include the "Next Phase: 2x8 Exhibit," at the A+D Museum, and the "Beginnings" lecture series which features established professionals discussing how they began their practices. The former is valuable for the insights it gives practitioners into the training of future professionals, and the latter for inspiring design students with respect to their chosen careers.

Green Plans

The new master plan for the 48-acre Los Angeles City College, developed by **Leo A Daly Architects** in association with **Bobrow/Thomas and Associates**, is the first full scale plan to fulfill Proposition A's sustainable building policy. In addition to creating a green academic sanctuary and upgrading numerous facilities, the master plan outlines the design of a new north entry plaza that will incorporate an existing Metro Red Line Station making LACC one of the few community colleges in Southern California with a subway connection. Included in the plan: a new Math, Science & Technology building, library, athletic field and gymnasium and an extensive landscaping master plan prepared by **Jubany Architecture/Spurlock Poirier Landscape Architects**.



FYI

Architect **Michael D. Kelly**, managing principal of SmithGroup in Los Angeles, died on June 30th at age 65 from heart failure. Born in 1937, Mr. Kelly received a bachelor's degree from the School of Architecture at the University of Notre Dame and began his career with McSweeney Ryan & Lee in San Francisco. In 1971 he joined Stone Marraccini and Patterson becoming its design director in 1975. Mr. Kelly was elected to the firm's board of directors in 1982, and then became president of the firm, with offices in San Francisco and Los Angeles, in 1991. After a brief hiatus, he returned to the firm, now the SmithGroup, as managing director of the Los Angeles office and board member of SmithGroup California. A talented designer, mentor and friend, Mr. Kelly is survived by his wife and four children.

Friends of the **Schindler House** and the MAK Center for Art and Architecture are seeking volunteer docents to guide the public through the landmark Schindler House and MAK Center exhibitions. Docent training available. Call 323-651-1510 for information.

Writer Linda Leigh Paul (*Tile & Stone* with Ann Sacks) is searching out residential retreats and vacation homes of historical and/or architectural significance in the Four Corners area of the southwest, for a Rizzoli/Universe book due in 2003. Send jpeg images to media@ipns.com



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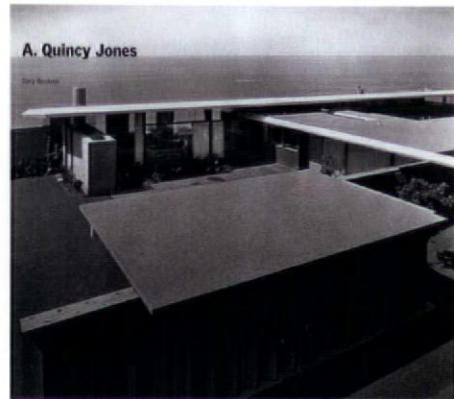
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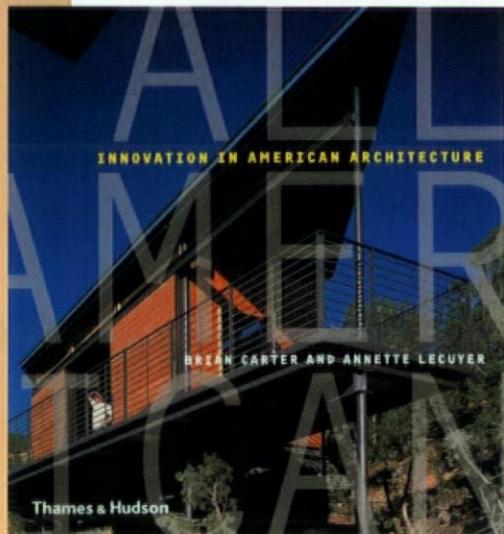
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(CORY BUCKNER. PHAIÐON, \$59.95 HC)
ISBN 0-7148-4074-2

It is easy to dismiss the work of Quincy Jones (1913–79) as modernism lite. His long association with Joseph Eichler and other suburban builders prevented him from being taken as seriously as more rigorous and rebellious peers. Modern architecture is supposed to be challenging; Jones made it look easy. However, a drive around Crestwood Hills in West LA, and a close examination of the model houses he and others designed for that enlightened housing association, engender a new respect. Pragmatic, inventive, and humane, Jones bridged the chasm between high art and popular taste, emphasizing practicality over ideology. Buckner has hands-on experience, having restored four Jones houses, and one wishes she had expanded her brief introduction to the architect's career to communicate his personal enthusiasm for his unshowy brilliance. In every other way, this is an admirable survey of 65 key projects, illustrated with vintage black and white photos, drawings and plans.

Rick Joy

(INTRODUCTION BY JUHANI PALLASMAA.
PRINCETON ARCHITECTURAL PRESS, \$40 PB)
ISBN 1-56898-336-0

A musician from Maine, who headed west and apprenticed to Will Bruder, the godfather of new Arizona architecture, Joy has built little in his ten years of independent practice, and only around his home base of Tucson. And yet, as this delectable monograph shows, he is a master designer. His houses—of raw steel or rammed earth—respond to the brutal beauty and intense light of the Sonoran desert, and, like Glenn Murcutt, he uses the simplest materials and forms to satisfy all the senses. In Pallasmaa's eloquent tribute and the superb color photos, you can feel the heat of the desert wind, run your hand over a rugged wall, and watch the earth change color as the sun sinks beneath the mountains.

All American: Innovation in American Architecture

(BRIAN CARTER & ANNETTE LECUYER. THAMES & HUDSON, \$40 HC)
ISBN 0-500-34182-6

Joy and his former colleague, Wendell Burnette, are among the 20 practices explored in this handsomely illustrated survey, but at least half the architects are little-known. The authors both teach at the University of Michigan, and they've focused on five regions—New York, Boston, the mid-West, Arizona, and California. Daly Genik, Gregg Lynn, and Guthrie + Buresh (who recently moved away) represent LA. The architectural state of the Union seems strong to judge from the quality of the work presented here.

Buildings of Colorado

(THOMAS J. NOEL. OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS, \$26 PB)
ISBN 0-19-515247-6

The fifth in an ongoing series of field guides to the buildings of the United States, commissioned from experts by the Society of Architectural Historians. Companion volumes are available on Alaska, DC, Iowa, Michigan, and Nevada, with another dozen in preparation. It's an invaluable project, the most ambitious of its kind since the WPA State guides of the 1930s, and it maps the terra incognita between the few major cities that have been professionally surveyed. Colorado is more notable for natural wonders than architecture, and had little more to show than Mesa Verde 150 years ago. Noel provides an encyclopedic 600 pages of plans, photos, and commentary on boom towns—from those that have faded to those, like Denver, that have exploded. He is equally sympathetic to the best new work, but stumbles in his appraisal of an Ed Niles house—a controversial cluster of glass cubes in Vail—as he observes: "This eyecatcher revives the International Style in the Postmodern tradition of Richard Meier."

Labour, Work and Architecture

(KENNETH FRAMPTON. PHAIÐON, \$49.95 HC) ISBN 0-7148-4080-7

An accurate title, for it is laborious work to extract the nuggets of wisdom from Frampton's dense prose. However, the result justifies the effort, for the Columbia professor has an intelligent opinion on almost every modern building and movement. This anthology of essays, written over the past 35 years, ranges from Russian Constructivism, through evaluations of Aalto, Kahn, and Le Corbusier, to reviews of the Berlin Philharmonie, the Leicester Engineering Building and the Ford Foundation Headquarters—which he excoriates as "A House of Ivy League Values."



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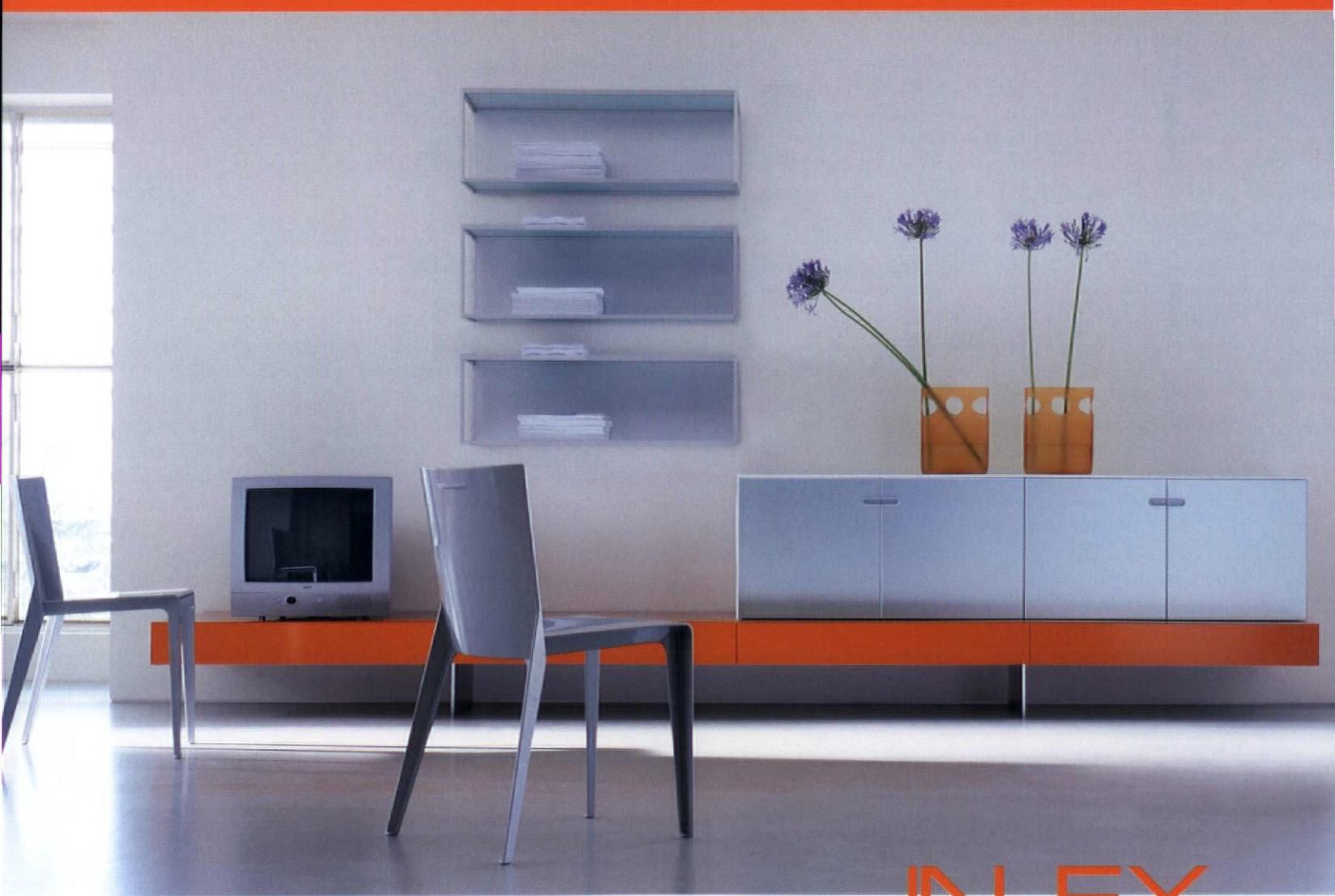
▼ Five pieces of furniture originally designed by **R.M. Schindler** are being reproduced thanks to the joint efforts of Marmol Radziner Furniture, the MAK Center, and FOSH(Friends of the Schindler House). The sling chair is constructed of redwood with vintage-style custom fabric. **866-869-0205**



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UNFINISHED BUSINESS

THE BIRTH OF CASE STUDY II

“...Case Study changed the world of

By TIBBY ROTHMAN

FROM 1945 TO 1962 THE CASE STUDY HOUSE PROGRAM BROKE OPEN the possibilities of contemporary design, bringing international modernism to the scale of the single-family dwelling. Featuring 24 single-family homes commissioned by John Entenza, the publisher of *Arts & Architecture Magazine*, it celebrated the open plan: rooms that flowed through one another, stopping nowhere, kitchen space giving way to dining space giving way to living space giving way to what lay outside—the freedom of the Southern California landscape—through spectacular glass walls that dazzled in a photographer's eye. The program's attainments are infinitely documented, it showcased indoor-outdoor living, accented the beauty of steel frame construction, launched the careers of Craig Ellwood and Pierre Koenig, unfettered the talents of Charles Eames and Richard Neutra. Half a century after Case Study ended, it remains a seminal moment in modern architecture; Julius Shulman says it failed.

During the program's heady days, Shulman photographed 15 of the Case Study houses—his own reputation ascending with that of the architects he chronicled. Today, he accuses the Case Study House program of betraying its most critical mission—to create models for affordable housing, fully executed single-family dwellings which could be replicated, built by the “average man.” Shulman contends they could not, that architectural egos overwhelmed the project, making design a priority over affordability. “They were not low-cost housing! They were not affordable housing!” he says of Case Study's homes. “[Entenza] was dreaming, being naïve or maybe just wishful thinking. How could he ever have lost control—he had no control over the architects' work!” Shulman is emphatic: Case Study changed the world of the architect, not the world of the client.

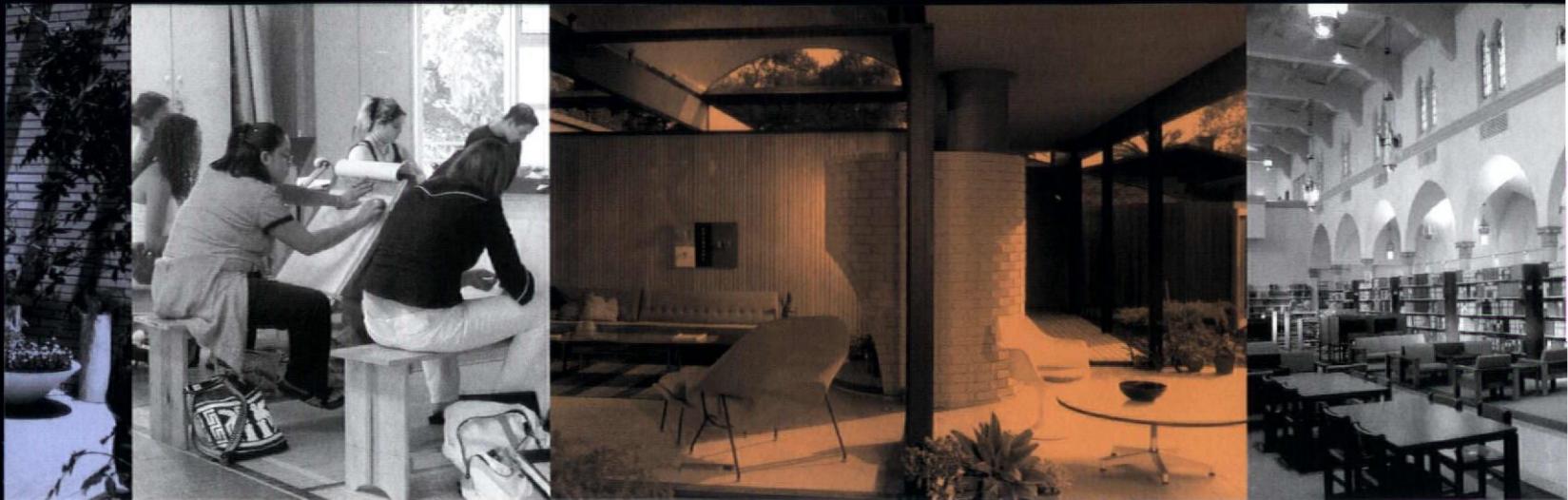
This fall, Woodbury University launches Case Study II under the aegis of a newly formed Julius Shulman Case Study Institute, housed on its Burbank campus. Under Case Study II, the university's architectural students and faculty will explore options to alleviate the current and critical

shortage of low cost shelter. As in the original Case Study House program, they will design and implement a series of built projects. However, as opposed to the center piece of Entenza's program—the single-family home—Case Study II will emphasize multi-unit dwellings.

Woodbury University is a small institution; its entire enrollment reaching only 1,404. Over 90% of the school's graduates obtain employment in their chosen fields; universities across the country flaunt such a statistic to raise funds and increase enrollment. But the numbers game at Woodbury also provides a picture of a vastly different student body than most private institutions. 70% of Woodbury's students are the first members of their families to attend college. 92% of Woodbury's architectural students receive some form of financial aid. A full 50% of the department's Latino students applying for financial aid come from families considered low-income. In short, at Woodbury, students often herald from the very communities slated to benefit from Case Study II's stated goal—to provide models for affordable housing in the twenty-first century.

Perhaps that is why, one night last spring, as he participated in a lecture on the original Case Study program, Julius Shulman, now in his 90s, looked down from a dais at MOCA and into the audience and pointed to a man he'd specifically invited to attend, “Ken Nielsen, the President of Woodbury, doesn't know it yet,” Shulman announced to both Nielsen and the audience, “but we are starting Case Study II. And Woodbury University is going to be the University.”

If the original Case Study was launched post-World War II as America grappled to secure housing for the flood of GI's returning to a country whose resources had been spent in the war effort, Case Study II is set amidst a nationwide affordable housing crisis that has created a daily battle for those caught in it. California carries the dubious distinction of being the state with the least amount of affordable housing stock in the country.



the architect, not the world of the client."

"What architecture students want to do when they get out [of school] is—create really wonderful big beautiful homes," observes Woodbury's development officer Rose Nielsen, who is fundraising for Case Study II along with Shulman. "But the reality is, we're in a changing world and low-cost housing is what these students must learn. It's a necessity; otherwise, we're not preparing them for the real world." As part of Case Study II's mission statement, the university states: "Woodbury University is committed to the ethical and responsible preparation of future architects."

In fact, Woodbury has a strong track record in non-profit and community work. "The theoretical stuff doesn't come at the expense of real world practicalities," emphasizes Heather Kurze, Dean of Woodbury's School of Architecture and Design. "Woodbury sees Case Study II as a continuation of that tradition—take a real and serious legitimate need and try to address it in as intense and thorough way as we can." Is there an added responsibility that comes with the Case Study name? "Yes, and that's why we're interested in doing Case Study II," Kurze responds.

If Woodbury inherited the Case Study mantle in one seemingly flippant second, their approach to carrying its legacy has and will continue to be careful, methodical, conscientious. Norman Millar, the university's Architecture Department Chair, foresees a year of planning and research before actual work begins on Case Study II. At the earliest, design work will begin Spring 2003. In the intervening months the faculty member chosen to oversee Case Study II will evolve policy for the program, investigate new trends in affordable and sustainable housing, solidify relationships with manufacturers and product suppliers, and talk to energy suppliers and the DWP, Millar says.

In all probability, Case Study II's first built design will be an on-campus student housing unit. The University is also exploring siting a project in Tijuana where financial support from the Mexican government makes affordable housing economically viable for builders in a community des-

perate for it. In terms of the Southern California landscape, Millar expresses interest in facilitating housing in such areas as south, central and east Los Angeles.

In addition to economic considerations, current criteria for Case Study II projects include:

- Building appropriately for current societal patterns such as the decline of the nuclear family, the needs of an aging population, increased percentage of single heads of household, increased needs for child and parent care.
- Working with governments and planning organizations to update/review codes and regulations to address the population's housing needs and improve the quality of urban living conditions.
- Appropriate innovation in sustainable technologies.

The emphasis on sustainable technology is a pivotal difference between the current Case Study and its predecessor. Another distinction is the presence of Woodbury's MBA School and the role it may play in obtaining creative financing for Case Study II endeavors.

Ironically, for all of Case Study II's emphasis on socio-economic-environmental factors, it is the architecture—which rose to prominence during the original Case Study—that will also receive a chance for resurrection. "In the 1940s and 50s modern architecture never caught hold in terms of a populist movement," observes John Berley, a past president of the Society of Architectural Historians, Southern California Chapter. "The working man didn't necessarily feel comfortable with it. It's this generation, the grandchildren of those who came back from WWII that are buying modern architecture and its most engaging principle: the idea of living with the landscape." ■



Worth the Wait

Orange Coast College Art Center by Steven Ehrlich Architects opens – at last.

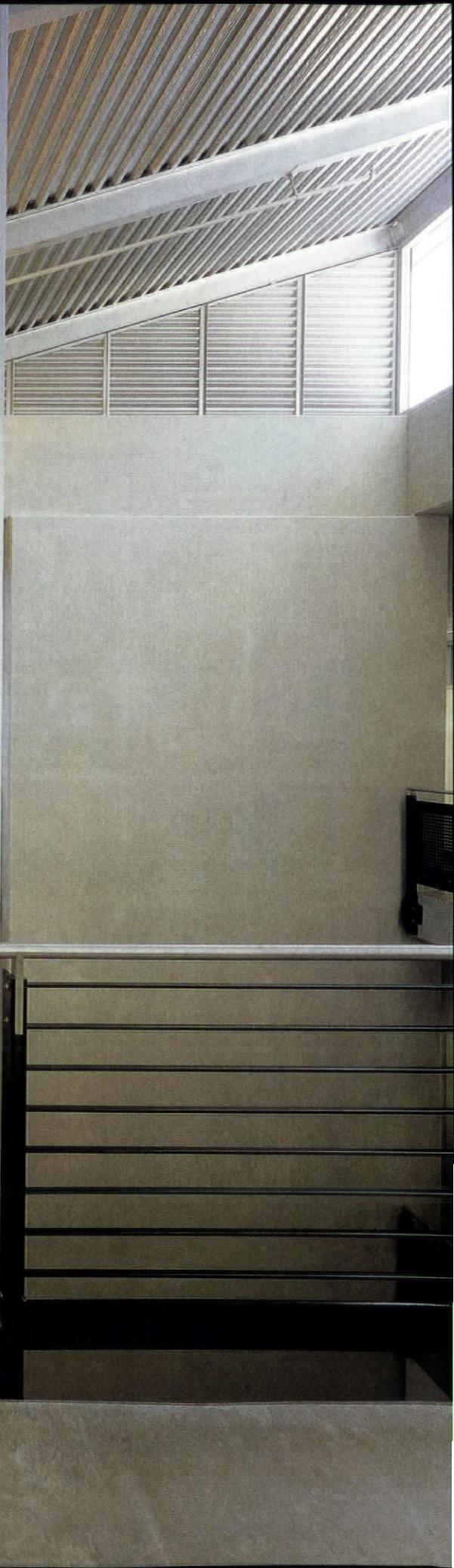
By ALLISON MILIONIS

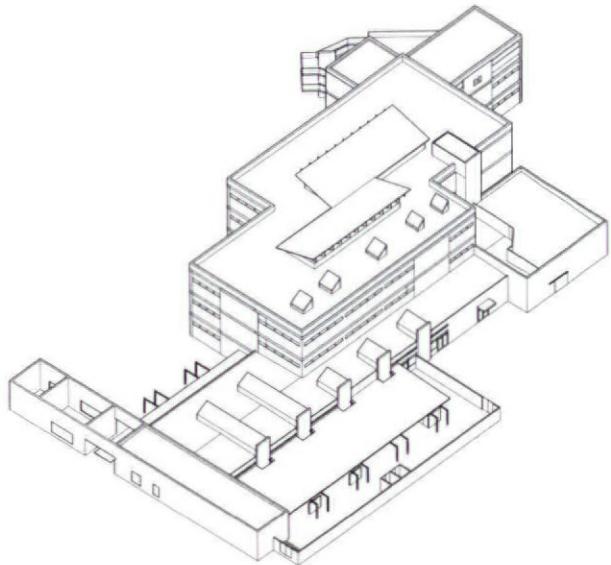
Photography ADRIAN VELICESCU

IN JANUARY 2002, AFTER NEARLY FOURTEEN PROTRACTED YEARS, Orange Coast College (OCC) Arts Center opened its doors to 665 eager art students and faculty. Commissioned in June 1990, state budget cuts and a recession put the brakes on the design process for several years, and it wasn't until 2000 that ground breaking was held. Though an arduous journey for Steven Ehrlich, Principal, Steven Ehrlich Architects, it was well worth the wait. The end result is a dynamic, clearly articulated arts precinct that reflects Ehrlich's design philosophy, the needs of the art department, and the spirit of Richard Neutra, who designed several of the original campus buildings in the late 40s and early 50s. The 60,000 square foot building snugly occupies the vertex of two green belts, completing a master planned quadrangle and splicing the visual lines of force to unite the campus. The new Art Center will undoubtedly become a campus landmark as well as a powerful magnet for the arts, on campus and in the community.

With this in mind, Ehrlich paid special attention to the entrance, a striking, two-story glass volume, which contains the faculty and staff offices, as well as a roof terrace accessible by the prominent, exterior stair. "The design evolved as three elements: a body, tail, and head," explained Ehrlich, "the head being a two-story glass volume; the body, a three-story series of art spaces; and the tail, a ground-level element for heavy materials, such as sculpture and ceramics." The two and three-story elements are composed of cast-in-place concrete, with one-story CMU and steel, while the ground-level building is exposed steel, corrugated metal and CMU. Lateral stability is achieved by the concrete shear walls, the infill articulated by corrugated metal painted white, and glass. The exposed structure, which is emphasized throughout, is especially dramatic in the atrium.







The three-story "body" is a voluminous vessel illuminated by clerestory windows. Bridges bisect the full-height atrium, connecting classrooms to art studios to computer labs. The vertical design is not only a response to the limitations of the site, but also Ehrlich's desire to avoid a layered, "pancake" scheme. Because three floors encompass several different departments, classrooms, and multiple studios for photography, 2 and 3D design, and painting, the intent was to create a space where any combination of disciplines might interconnect, even cross-pollinate. "I think it is exciting when there is that spark of two disciplines, when someone doing ceramics might bump into someone doing sculpture or photography, for example," said Ehrlich. Anticipating the outcome of these interactions, students will be encouraged to exhibit their art on or along the walls of the center.

Though less dramatic, the "tail" or industrial wing is no less functional. At ground level, access to materials such as ceramics, sculpture, wood and video equipment is made simple, and a covered yard provides ample space for the kilns and other heavy equipment. Like the rest of the Art Center, the wing is technologically advanced, and specially outfitted with professional recording and filming facilities. The most distinguishing characteristic of this building is the north-facing light monitors that flood the inner studio with ambient light.

Though it was a long time in the making, the Art Center's presence on this campus, graced with relics of mid-century modernism, will stand as another example of the timelessness of good design philosophy and an amplifier for the arts, inspiring future generations of creative thinkers. ■

ORANGE COAST COLLEGE ART CENTER
Costa Mesa, California

ARCHITECT:

Steven Ehrlich Architects
Steven Ehrlich, FAIA:
Design Principal

Nick Seierup, AIA:
Principal-In-Charge (Design Phase)
Cecily Young, AIA:
Principal-In-Charge (Construction Phase)

Haekwan Park, Job Captain
Thomas Zahlten, AIA
Gary Alzona

Peter Magyar

Ursula Kachler

Natalie Tan

Mark Kim

Scott Hunter

Andrea Moura

Andreas Gritschke

Richard Lin

Oliver Bachman

Jenny Wu

Darko Breza

Rita Chang

Gregor Seeweg

STRUCTURAL ENGINEER:
John A. Martin & Associates
Los Angeles, CA

M/E/P ENGINEER:
TMAD Engineers, Inc.
Ontario, CA

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT:
EDAW, Inc.
Irvine, CA

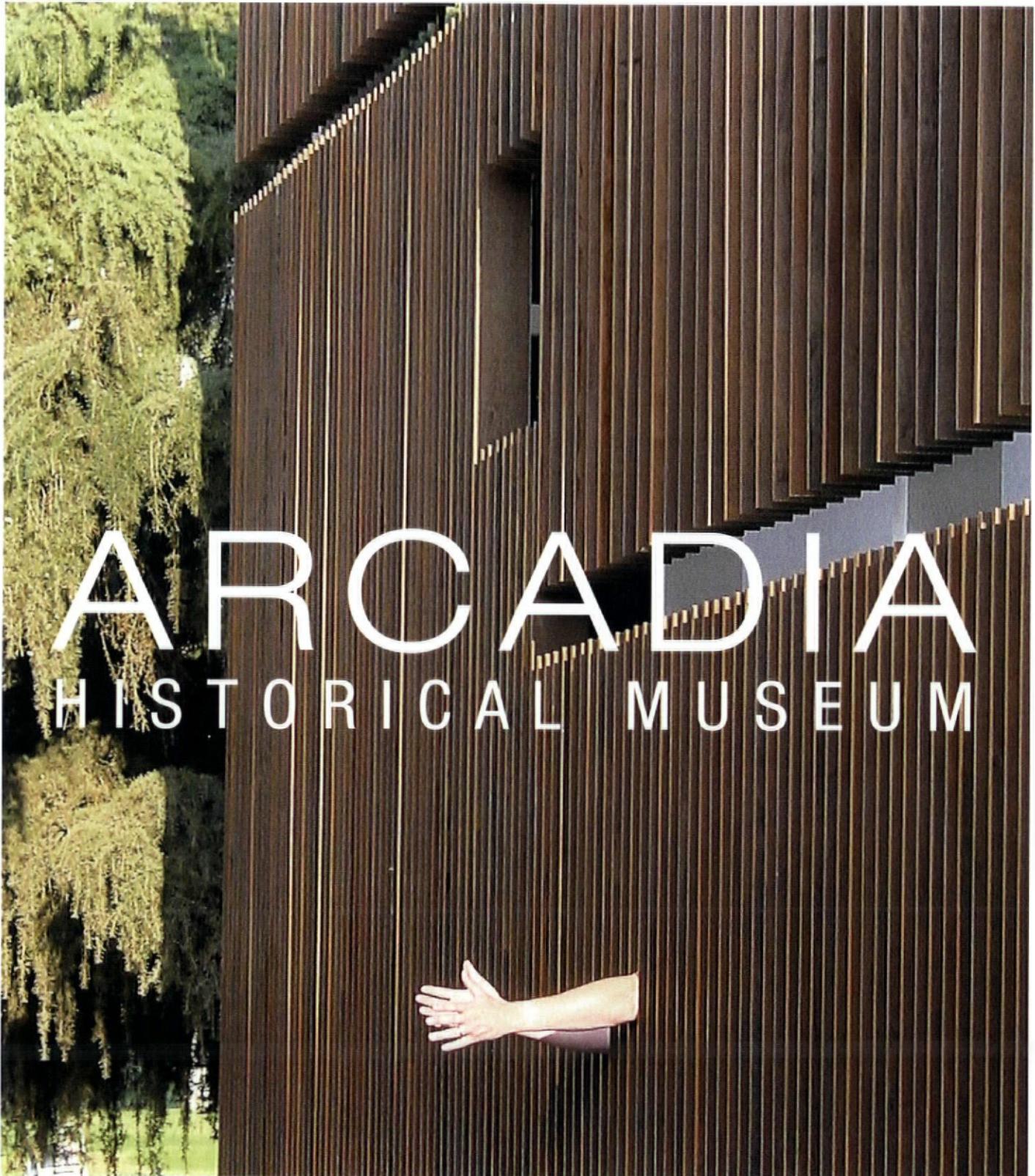
CIVIL ENGINEER:
EKN Engineering, Inc.
Newport Beach, CA

SPECIFICATIONS:
ANC Specification Consultants
Newbury Park, CA

LIGHTING DESIGN:
ILD – Integrated Lighting Design
Marina del Rey, CA

ACOUSTICAL CONSULTANT:
Arup Acoustics
Los Angeles, CA

GENERAL CONTRACTOR:
KPRS Construction Services, Inc.
Brea, CA



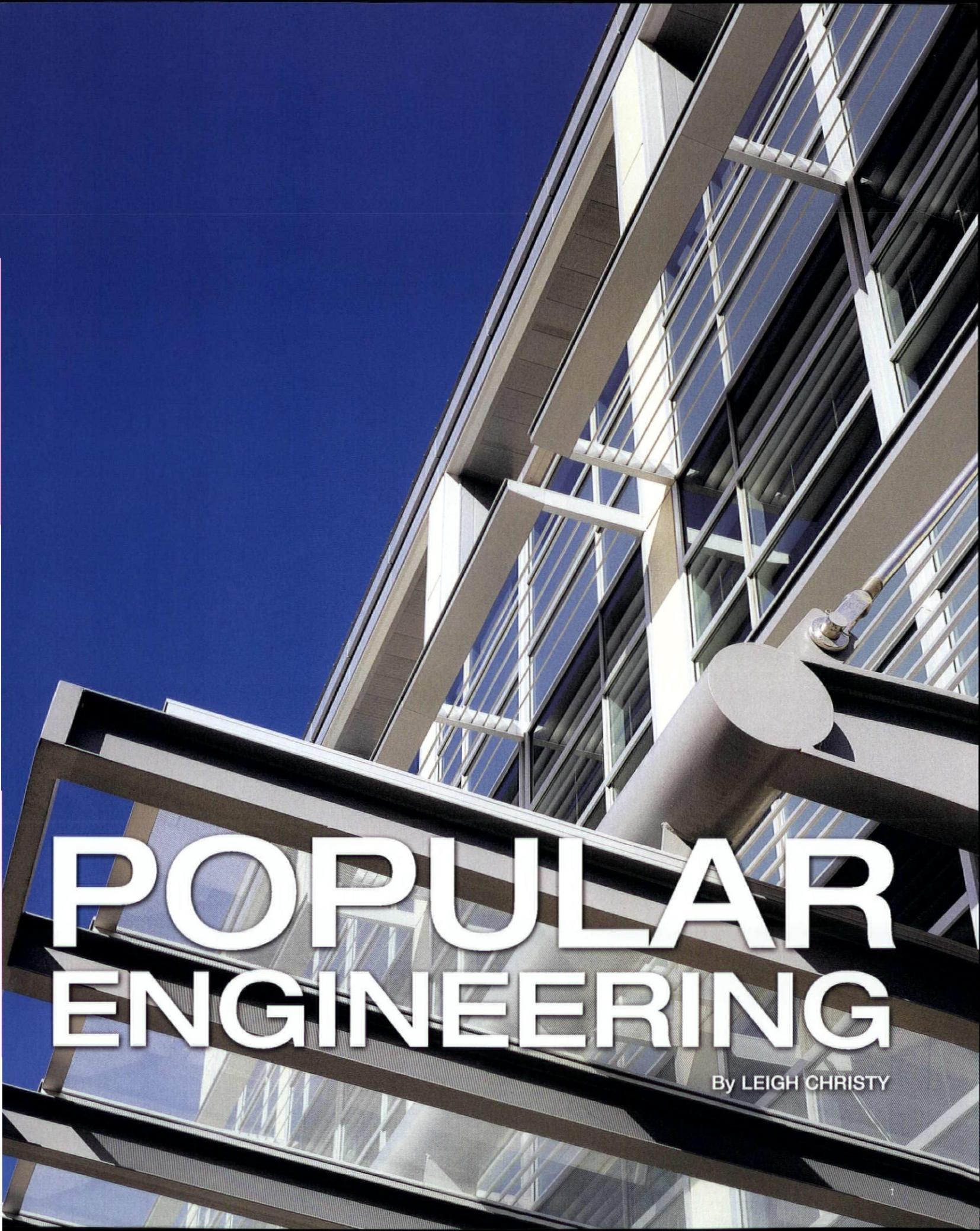
PHOTOGRAPHY BY
John Linden

Inspired by the complex relationship between the historian who records the past and the museum visitor experiencing the present, John Sparano and Anne Mooney of **Sparano + Mooney Architecture** based their design process on the impact of filters, historical and contemporary, on what and how an object is viewed. This construct was translated into built language by an architecture that changes dramatically based on the position of the observer: the façade dissolves as one looks through the wood louver screen; at an oblique angle, the façade appears solid. ■



ARCADIA HISTORICAL MUSEUM ARCADIA, CALIFORNIA

CLIENT: City of Arcadia, Arcadia Historical Society, Ruth V. and Charles E. Gilb Family Foundation, **ARCHITECT:** Sparano + Mooney Architecture, John Sparano, AIA: Principal, Anne Mooney: Principal, Michael Atkinson, Matt Bean, Rene Berndt, Mahnaz Zahiry, Tomahisa Hiayuchi, **EXHIBITS/GRAFICS:** Melisa Keeler, **MECH ENGINEER:** Moroko & Shwe, **ELECTRICAL ENGINEER:** Felix Roth & Associates, **STRUCTURAL ENGINEER:** William Ho, **CIVIL ENGINEER:** Civil Trans, **LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE:** Gil Flores, **SPECIFICATIONS:** Jo Drummond, C.S.I.



POPULAR ENGINEERING

By LEIGH CHRISTY



2

Anshen+Allen rework an outdated warren of add-ons into a socially adept learning facility

"SOCIAL SKILLS 101" SOUNDS MORE LIKE A REQUIRED COURSE FOR COMMUNICATIONS MAJORS than a supplementary skill set learned in an engineering school. Yet for the University of Iowa's College of Engineering, proficiency in collaboration is no longer a side effect of higher education, but a goal in and of itself.

Both the world and the engineering field are becoming more interconnected and less insular through revolutions such as the now-standard Internet and other advanced communication technologies. Research sharing, computer-based teaching methods, and a general increase in contact between both academic and professional engineers then lead to an increased need for these engineers to have—you guessed it—some serious social and communication skills. Acknowledging this trend, the College of Engineering felt strongly that its campus modernization and addition should not only include a much-needed technological upgrade, but also focus on building community between its disparate engineering departments.



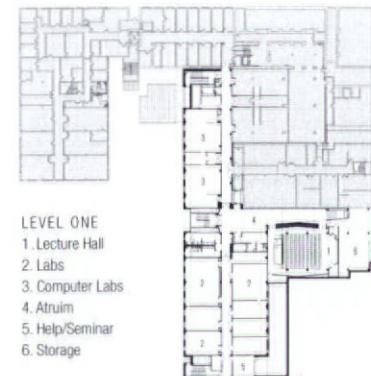


Anshen + Allen Los Angeles, along with local architects Neumann Monson, PC of Iowa City, accomplished these goals for the College in their design of the Seamans Center for the Engineering Arts and Sciences. Completed in the fall of 2001, the 58,000 square-foot renovation and 103,000 square-foot addition added the requisite research and teaching laboratories, electronic classrooms, large lecture hall, conference rooms, and scattered lounges. The new design also included two significant spaces around which all other program pieces were organized: the Student Learning Center and the Student Activities Center.

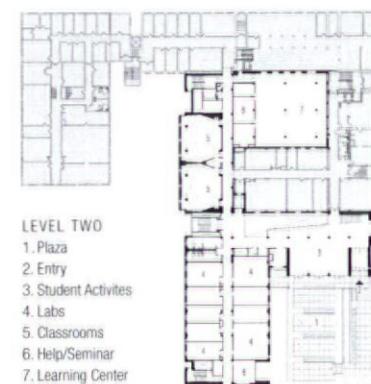
As the existing building had been built over a period of nearly 70 years in a series of additions, its resultant plan more closely resembled a rabbit warren of narrow corridors and little rooms than a university level engineering building. The first move in unifying and modernizing the College, then, was to rework the plan of the building into a more cohesive design based on the locations of these two large social spaces.

Carved out of an existing courtyard and adjacent to the renovated library, the Student Learning Center is the main study area. This two-story space is broken down into smaller Team Project Areas, providing a setting for the student group-study encouraged by the College. The Student Activities Center then forms the social heart of the building. Placed in the centrally located new 5-story atrium, this space functions both as a living room for the students and a transition piece between the existing structure and the addition to the south.

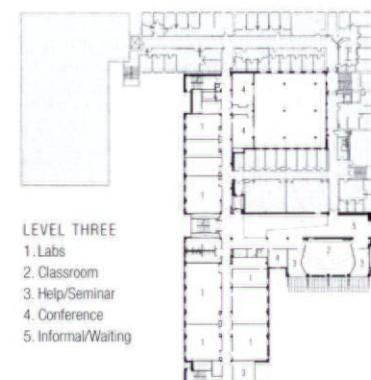
Anshen + Allen then fit all of these spaces within an envelope formed of limestone on the east (a nod to the existing structure) and metal and glass on the south-facing entry (an acknowledgement of the present). Finally, a zinc rainscreen runs along the western face and extends above the roofline, giving the building an increased presence on the campus skyline. If all goes as planned, the new common spaces will also give the College an increased presence in its students' minds and lives as they spend more time there learning from each other—a necessity to which we architects can surely relate. ■



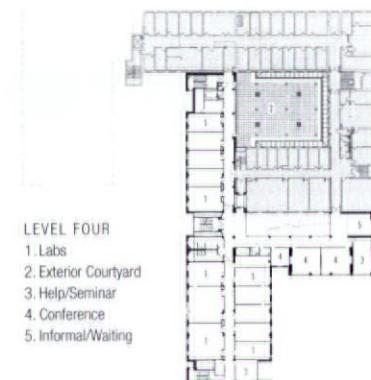
LEVEL ONE
1. Lecture Hall
2. Labs
3. Computer Labs
4. Atrium
5. Help/Seminar
6. Storage



LEVEL TWO
1. Plaza
2. Entry
3. Student Activities
4. Labs
5. Classrooms
6. Help/Seminar
7. Learning Center
8. Conference



LEVEL THREE
1. Labs
2. Classroom
3. Help/Seminar
4. Conference
5. Informal/Waiting



LEVEL FOUR
1. Labs
2. Exterior Courtyard
3. Help/Seminar
4. Conference
5. Informal/Waiting

CLIENT:
University of Iowa

DESIGN ARCHITECT:
Anshen+Allen, Los Angeles

EXECUTIVE ARCHITECT:
Neumann Monson PC

LABORATORY PLANNER:
Research Facilities Design

INTERIOR DESIGN:
CNI Design

LIGHTING:
Christopher Bowsher,
Architectural Lighting

PHOTOGRAPHY:
Assassi Productions

1. ENTRY CANOPY

A simple yet intricate sunshade system is used to protect the glazed south entry facade from direct sunlight.

2. NEW BUILDING ENTRY

The new south-facing building entrance of glass and steel slips between parallel limestone walls, forming the edges of a landscaped exterior plaza.

3. TRANSITION-OVERALL

Reflecting the juxtaposition of past and present, the new metal and glass entry facade and atrium contrast with the more solid and traditional limestone elevations.

4. ATRIUM

Physically and symbolically joining the otherwise separate floors and sections of the building, the centrally located 5-story atrium is flooded with natural light and surrounded by flexible study spaces.

5. STUDENT LEARNING CENTER

The Student Learning Center is the new academic heart of the building. Carved out of an existing courtyard, the space has been broken down into areas for small group meetings.

Adapt-A-School



17th + Grand. Rendering by AC Martin Partners, Inc.

BUSING EDUCATION BACK TO THE URBAN CORE

By MORRIS NEWMAN



17th + Grand model. Mark Lohman Photography

IT IS A SERIOUS, IF AUDACIOUS, PROPOSAL: TO FASHION A HIGH SCHOOL OUT OF A 14-STORY parking structure in downtown LA. The owner, Maguire Partners, reached an agreement in principle earlier this year to sell the structure to Los Angeles Unified School District, and Maguire hired A.C. Martin Partners Inc. to prepare a schematic design of a 10-level school for 1,500 students. In Martin's scheme, the 14-story structure loses four of its upper floors (13, 11, 9, and 7) providing four double-height stories for an auditorium and extra-tall classrooms. The scheme removes the automobile ramps, leaving an immense light well in its stead, perforated with framed views of downtown LA. The remaining floors are filled with classrooms. The cafeteria and gymnasium are perched atop the building like Corbusian roof sculptures, each with its own separate enclosure. The workaday façade of the garage becomes an artsy elevation of glass, steel and concrete, and



Above & right: Camino Nuevo Charter School. Tom Bonner Photography.

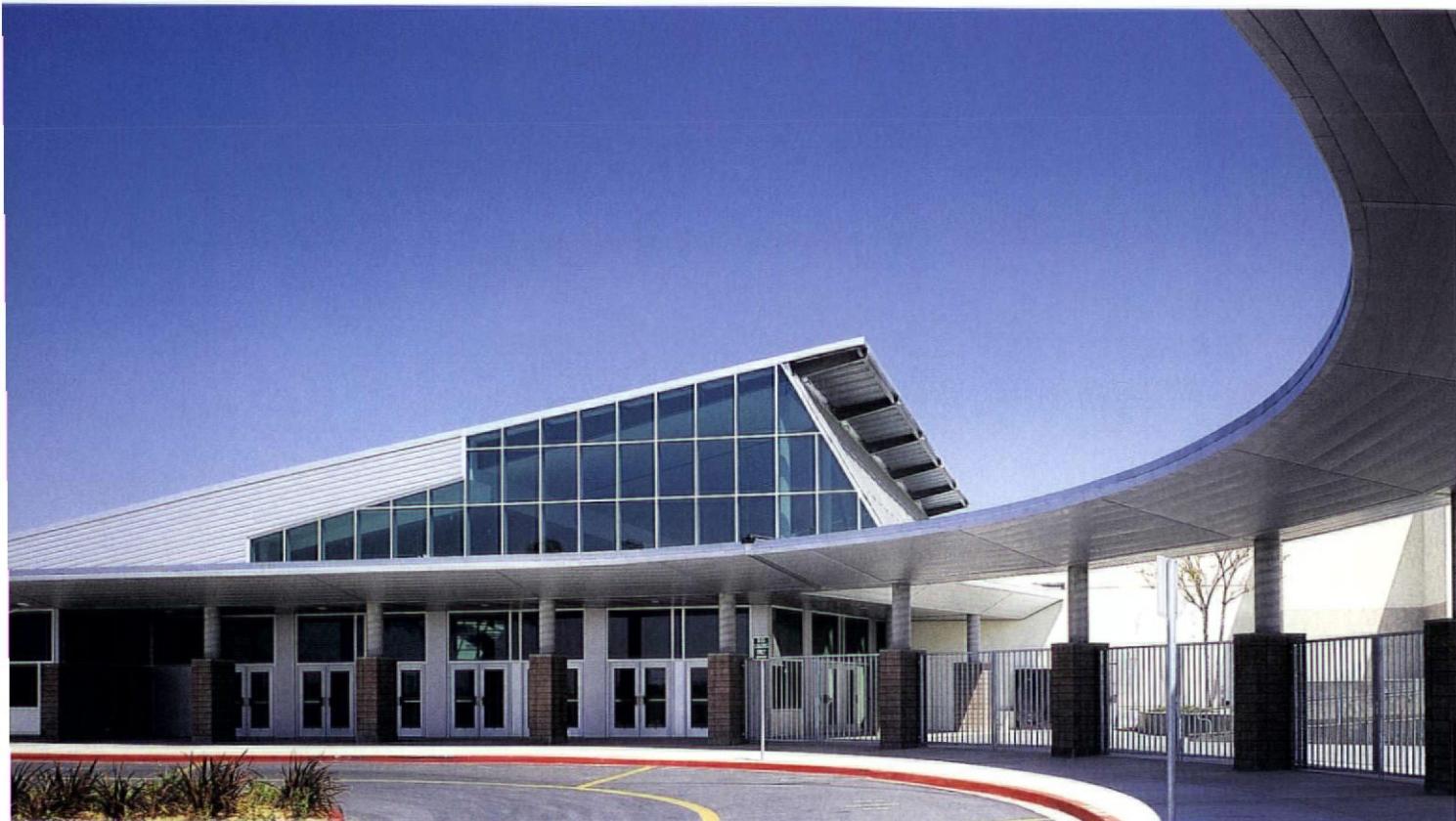
the architects are exploring the possibility of image-projection technology on the elevation, sending elevated messages about education visible to drivers on the Harbor Freeway. A structure becomes architecture.

The Martin scheme to remake the garage at 17th and Grand into South Central LA High School No. 3 remains a proposal, until—and it's a big “if”—adequate funding comes down from the State of California. Still, the project remains fascinating, partly because of its boldness, and in part because it symbolizes the hunger for classroom space that has finally made Los Angeles Unified School District look into the possibility of adaptive reuse.

If South Central LA High School No. 3 is far from certain, the practice of using existing buildings for school facilities—a commonsensical notion which has nonetheless been shunned by public school districts until very recently—is now becoming an acceptable strategy in an increasingly dense city where large development parcels are either too rare or too expensive for school facilities. (LAUSD, in fact, is converting another existing building, a former Department of Water & Power building in Sun Valley, as East Valley High School, with Thomas Blurock Architects as the designer.) Until recently, adaptive reuse was an option only for schools like Crossroads and New Roads in Santa Monica, which consist of multiple office and industrial buildings rehabbed by various architects, or charter schools like Camino Nuevo near downtown LA, an AIA-award winning project by Daly Genik, who used an abandoned mini-mall as the basis for a 11,000-square-foot school.

The implications of adaptive reuse school facilities for the urban environment are potentially profound. Beyond providing new life to under-used structures, the increasing acceptance of school conversions may be an omen that the concept of sequestering schools within Arcadian campuses may be entering the twilight. Schools become one more urban use in the great mix of uses, and that is both a challenging and/or frightening possibility in a society that has come to regard schools—particularly middle and highschools—as “locally unpopular land uses” (or “lulu’s,” as they





Pueblo Elementary School. South side of school. Milroy Macleer Photography.



Pueblo Elementary School. North side of the complex.
Milroy Macleer Photography.

are known in planning circles.) Outside California, some writers have asserted that locating high schools on the suburban periphery, where land is cheap and the use politically acceptable, is a cause of urban sprawl.

Adaptive reuse is operational, not theoretical, in Pomona, where the local school district has acquired a failed shopping center on 66 acres in a depressed neighborhood. Within the ingenious project known as Village @ Indian Hill, Pomona Unified School District has converted portions of the mall into two elementary schools, a middle school and high school, as well as administrative space. (Part of the mall remains open as a shopping center, providing the school district with rental income from mall tenants.) One of the most striking elements on the campus is the 110,000-square-foot Pueblo Elementary School, fashioned out of an abandoned "big box" formerly occupied by Zody's. The design by Thomas Blurock features classrooms clustered in "villages" around a media center and other common areas, illuminated by newly installed skylights.

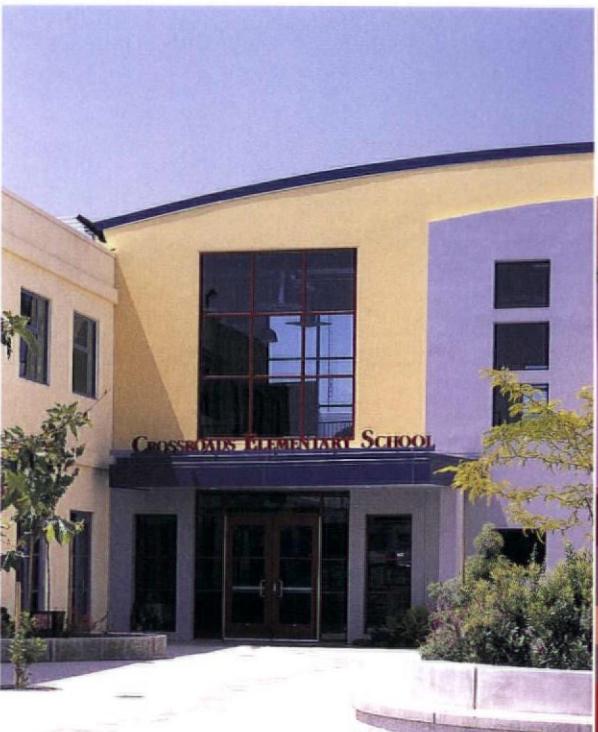
If existing buildings offer opportunities for school facilities, even the notion of reusing buildings conflicts with the traditional culture of school construction. According to standards set up by LAUSD, elementary schools need about three acres (roughly a city block), while middle schools can occupy eight acres or more and high schools start at 20 acres. You don't have to be an expert in land economics to realize that such parcels scarcely exist in Los Angeles, and when they do, they are exorbitantly expensive. Two debacles inspired by the district's quixotic quest for land are LAUSD's on-again, off-again attempts to buy the former Ambassador Hotel on Wilshire Boulevard, as well as a contaminated industrial site in South Gate. Even with these embarrassments, however, the district's decision to relax those standards in some cases has been a matter of necessity, not choice.



Pueblo Elementary School. Interior classroom corridor. Milroy Macleer Photography.



Crossroads Elementary School. Randall Michelson Photography.



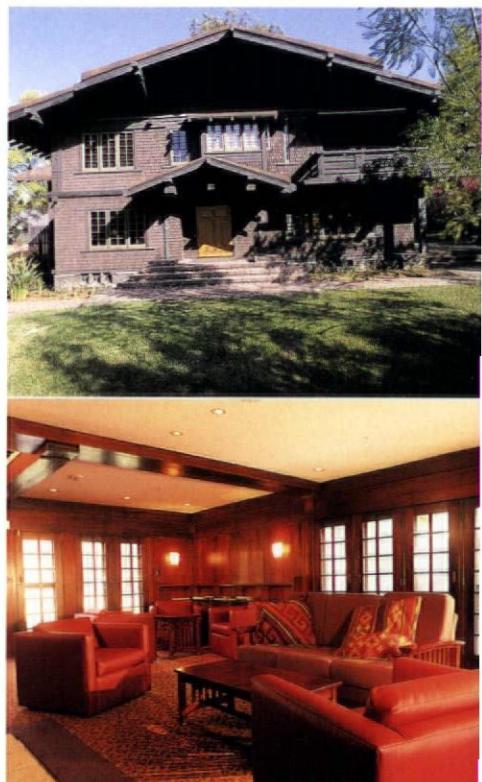
Crossroads Elementary School. Randall Michelson Photography.



If adaptive reuse has removed some of the difficulties in site selection, however, the process of converting non-school structures to educational use has opened the door to unaccustomed difficulties. One of the biggest challenges is to make a building compliant with Title 24 Fire/Life Safety issues, as well as current seismic standards, and structural retrofits can be more complex than building new. At the Zody's-turned-Pueblo Elementary in Pomona, Thomas Blurock stripped the building back to its underlying structure to install brace frames and grade beams throughout the structure, as well as a new roof, to provide shear to a building that had virtually none before.

Buildings not originally designed as schools, especially buildings with large floors, can be bears to convert. At Crossroads Elementary, Pica & Sullivan were faced with former aerospace engineering buildings with enormous floors and very few windows. After reinforcing the concrete-block walls, the architects broke up the big floors, by arranging classrooms in square doughnuts around sky-lit lobbies. They also cut numerous windows into the blank walls, covered the concrete block with stucco and painted the buildings pale yellow. In the dark, windowless interior of the buildings, the architects created wide hallways that serve as "streets" connecting the different classroom clusters. In comparison, restoring the Pitcairn House in Pasadena by Greene & Greene was comparatively easy, according the same architects, who converted the house into administrative space for the Westridge School for Girls, while a neighboring, Tudor-style house became seminar rooms and the principal's office.

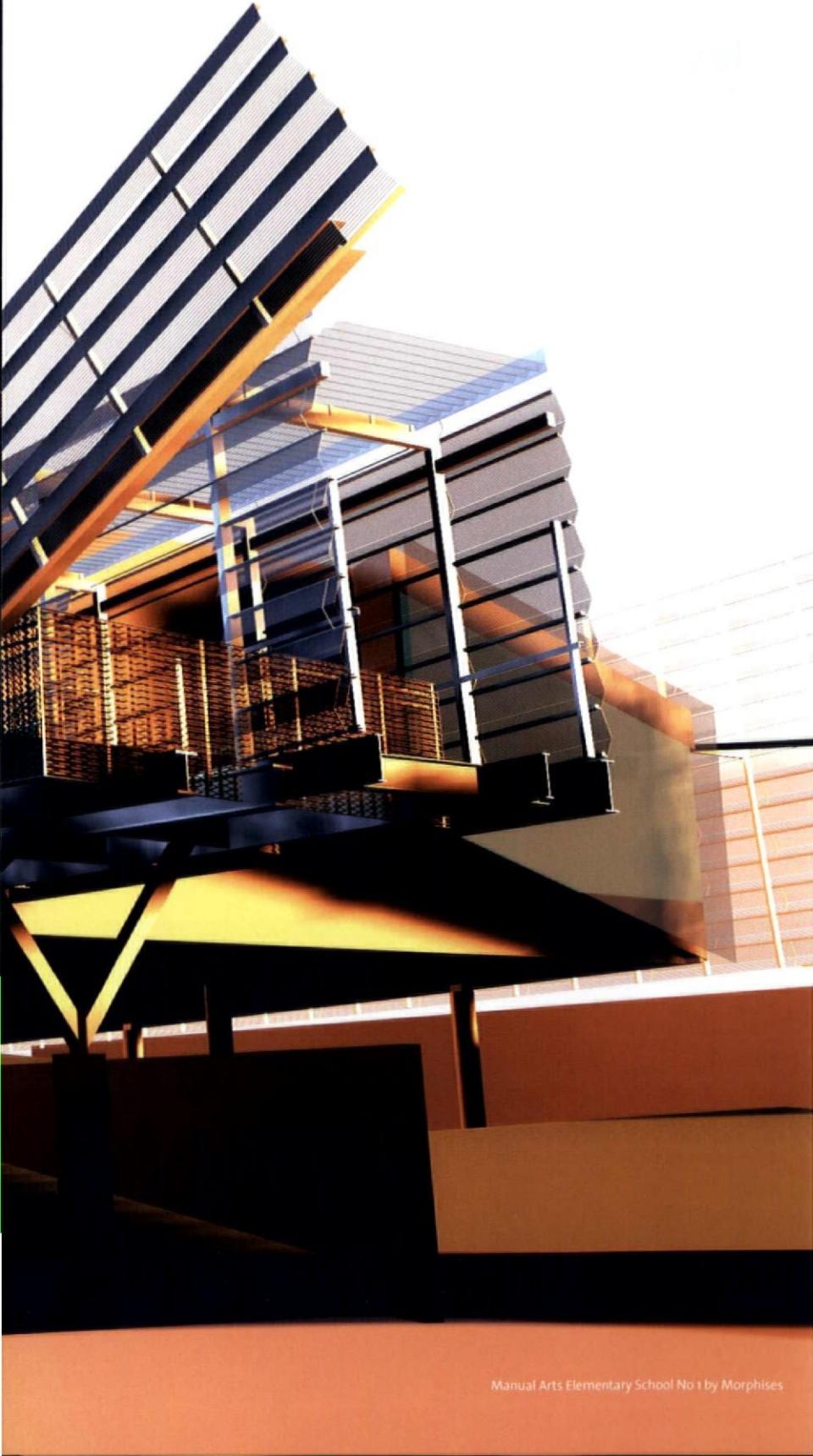
Beyond its other advantages, such as lower construction costs, adaptive reuse for schools has a deeper and more important potential: to integrate schools and students back into urban life. This may be viewed as a mixed blessing for parents who seek to protect their children from urban ills, real and imagined, as well as business owners near schools who do not like teenagers or school-related traffic. Still, adaptive reuse allows schools to become part of the city again. Perhaps the ill effects of schools on surrounding neighborhoods can be lessened if schools are simply one more use on a mixed-use boulevard, and not crowded, isolated institutions that dominate their surroundings. In any event, the experiment has begun. ■



Pitcairn House Restoration/Westridge School.
Randall Michelson Photography.

Midterm Report





School Building 101

BY LISA ROSEN

THE HARD FACTS DON'T GET MUCH HARDER: Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) has 735,000 students, and its schools are 200,000 seats short. Year-round multi-track schooling shortens the school year for 300,000 children, and takes a toll on facilities already taxed by overcrowding. As LAUSD Superintendent Roy Romer said, "The problem is so great that we literally have got to solve it to save the district."

A school bond passed in 1997 provided funding for a massive building project, but for two years, the crisis in schooling met an equal and opposite crisis in management, as the district failed to get the project moving. Kathi Littman came from working in the private sector for a developer, to become Deputy Chief Executive for New Construction in the fall of 1999. She had already seen two superintendents and three directors of facilities come and go by the time Roy Romer came on board as Superintendent in July of 2000. James McConnell, a naval captain with a career of major building projects for the Navy, was brought in as Chief Facilities Executive.

A plan had to be created to shepherd one of the largest public works projects LA had ever seen through a system that hadn't built one new high school in over twenty years. The new team assessed the areas of greatest need for the first phase of school construction. "This first round was triage," Littman said. "We were going to have to hire credentialed bus drivers to teach on the bus, there were no seats. So the schools that had the most kids bused out, and had been on multi-track the longest, got the relief first."

The goal in the first round of construction: to build 77,000 new classroom seats by winter of 2006. Construction plans involve 80 new schools, 60 additions to existing schools, and 19 playground expansions, for a total of 159 separate projects. The timing and scheduling challenges have been overwhelming, as listed by Romer: "Identify the land, get a community to agree, get it purchased or condemned, get the environmental process approved, get the design done, get it to the state in time to get it funded, get it contracted, build it, supervise it, and pay for it." Repeat, 159 times.

As if this wasn't daunting enough, the team also realized they had to rewrite school standards that hadn't been updated in 18 years, and which included such outdated requirements as 25 acres



Belmont Primary Center No. 11 by Gonzalez Goodale Architects





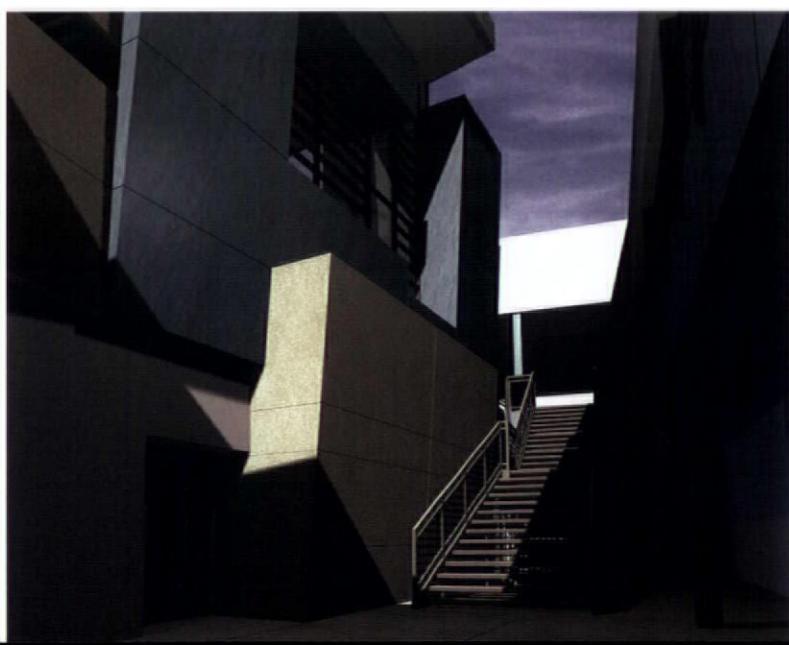
for a high school. Unfortunately for the architects, even after the designs were well underway, new guidelines were still being sent out. "We built the airplane while we were flying this time," Littman said. "I have people doing spec revisions while we speak."

Littman's staff grew from four to four hundred. She hired architect Marv Taff, FAIA as an independent consultant to evaluate the schools from a design perspective. Taff in turn created a Design Advisory Council to serve as a peer review group, with Robert Timme, FAIA, (Dean, USC School of Architecture) serving as chairman. Timme in turn selected nine other architects who often teach in addition to being respected members of the field, so that they had experience giving constructive criticism. "We were all a little bit nervous about it because it's rare that you have a situation where you critique another professional," Timme recalled. As it turned out, the professionals appreciated the Council's efforts in pushing them to strengthen their

designs. They also came to view the Council as an advocacy group for their work.

And they needed advocating. Each project was assigned a manager by the district, and these project managers, coming from engineering and construction backgrounds, were under enormous pressure to deliver on schedule and on budget. As a result, some of the managers seemed to treat the architects as adversaries in the process, rather than allies. This contrasted greatly with the attitudes of senior management such as Romer, Littman, and McConnell, whom the architects praise as great visionaries and leaders. "I think all of them are heroes," said Council member and project architect Leo Marmol (Marmol Radziner & Associates), echoing the sentiments of his colleagues. "They're trying to do the best they can inside this fishbowl." (According to Marmol, Romer's present role as superintendent is harder than his previous one as Governor of Colorado. "This job is more political, more treacherous, and more thankless.") The architects were troubled by the apparent disconnect between the top echelon and the project managers. "Some of the project managers are really good, but some only see the dollars, the bottom line, and need to be educated to the fact that the same dollar can be used wisely or poorly," Timme said.

So in November 2001, the Design Advisory Council and USC organized a symposium for the architects to identify best practices, addressing how the district and the architects could work together more effectively. According to one architect present who wished to remain anonymous, "We all got together and cried on each other's shoulders about the varying levels of unprofessional treatment of the architects." Another (anonymous) architect voiced a common complaint. One of his project managers had told him that his was the only firm that was





not performing as needed on a particular item. "The project manager would say, 'Do you want us just to fire you and get one of the other architects to do it?' We talked to our colleagues and they'd say, 'Yeah, they're saying the same thing to me.'"

Fortunately, as a result of the symposium, many architects noticed an improvement in the way many of the project managers related to their respective architects. Another symposium at the Getty Center in March 2002 entitled *Lessons Learned*, featuring an exhibit of 20 school models, also helped the relationship. "Having the symposium held at this elegant environment, everybody including the architects and project managers felt that they were part of something big and potentially really important," said another architect. Timme recalled that Superintendent Romer told the crowd, "I didn't know we were building such incredible schools," and then went on to emphasize the importance of great design. That sent a message down through the district. "We notice that project managers are listening much more," he said. "When it comes from the top that we're concerned about design, and projects done well, it helps encourage a better quality of building."

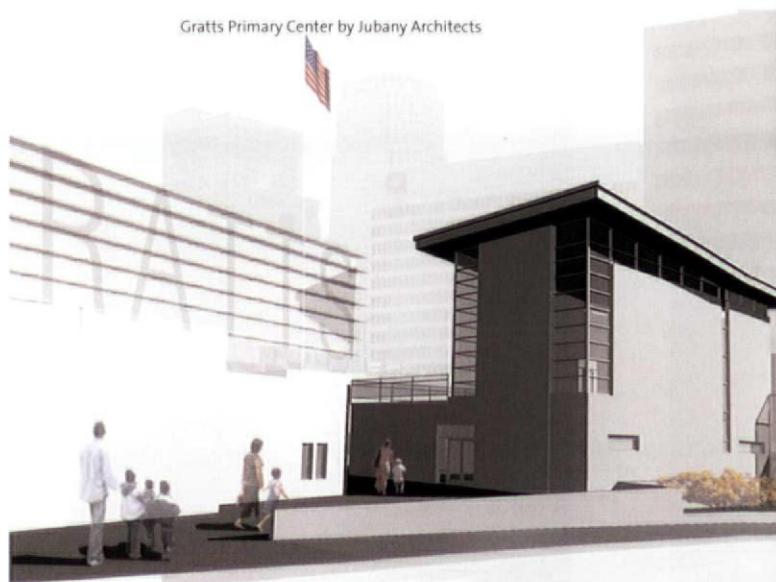
The symposium served a number of practical purposes. "After about a year of doing this, we started noticing the same design problems coming up," Timme noted. "The schools are on extremely small sites, not like school buildings 20 years ago. They needed to be much more relevant to neighborhoods, in terms of character, sustainability, the idea of after-hours use for the facilities, parking, natural ventilation, landscape, and so on." The architects held break-out sessions addressing various problems, and suggesting solutions. Kathi Littman was amazed with the results. "By the time we went through the different topics at the Getty, there was one or more firm that had figured out

the solution to a problem in every circumstance," she said. The session results are featured on a website the Council created with USC, to help designers through the next round of projects (www.usc.edu/lessonslearned).

Despite the symposia, some architects have still had trouble dealing with their project managers, and with the district as a client. Littman understands and agrees with many of the complaints, and is working to implement changes in the process so the same problems don't occur in the next round. (Round Two involves the creation of 35,000 more seats in the district.) "No one will be managing any project who hasn't actually taken a set of design documents through to a completed building," she promises. Further, project managers will continue to be trained to clearly articulate their vision for the project to the architects, "and encouraged to recognize not just their own benchmarks of time and budget, but those of the team they work with, such as excellence in design." Architects will be given the new standards at the beginning of the



Gratts Primary Center by Jubany Architects

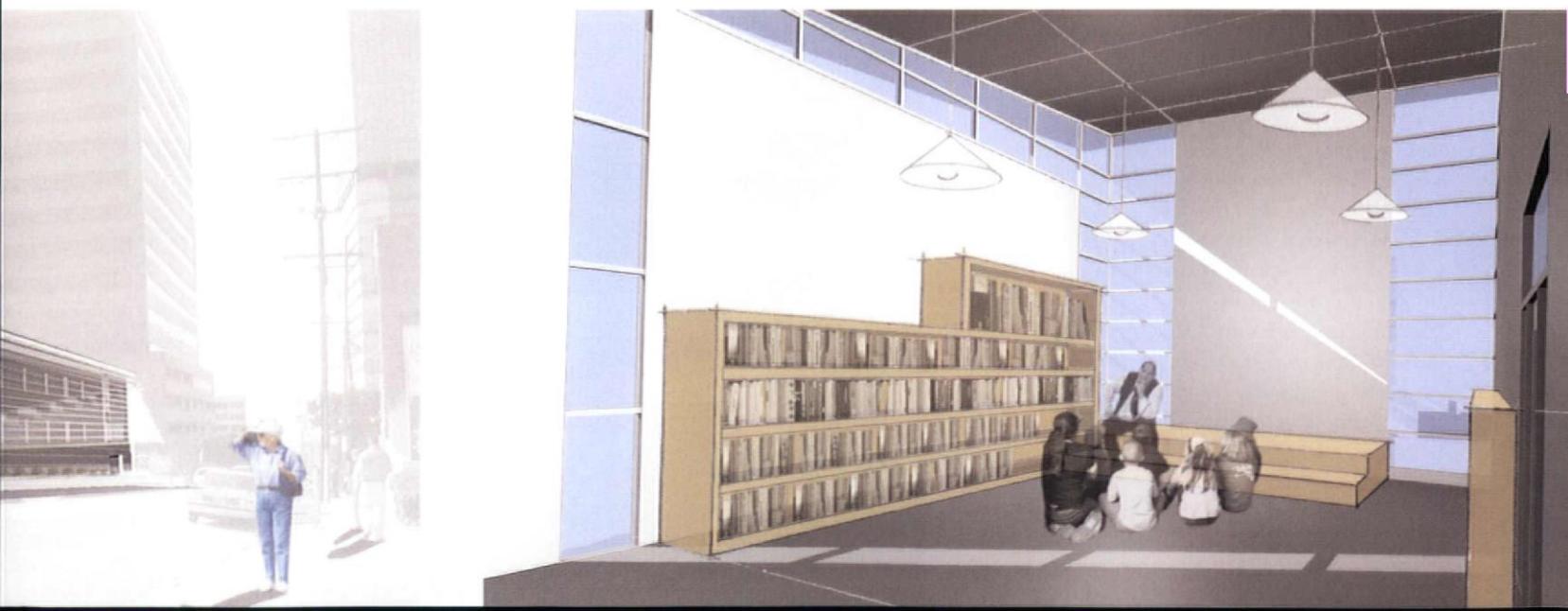




process, rather than after they've completed their designs. Littman plans to establish reviews, so there will be a chance to go back and revisit any missed opportunities in design before the process is too far along. The state funding system has greatly improved, so the architects won't be suffering under such tight time constraints. She believes the next round will be much easier for the architects as well as the managers, thanks to all the lessons learned.

And while architects naturally focus on their own part of the process, they do see the bigger picture as well. "You have to make decisions about getting these kids off the buses and out of crowded classrooms, and sometimes those are hard decisions," said Chet Widom, FAIA, whose firm WWCOT

Central High School No.10. Rendering courtesy of Johnson Fain Partners





South East High School by González Goodale Architects

is designing several schools for the district. "The architect in me wants the district to focus on design, but the citizen part of me says those kids deserve a decent place to be, regardless of whether it lasts for a long time or not. It's a hard set of issues to balance." Regarding architects' concerns with project managers, Widom suggests that "a review board to bring problems up in a manner that's not threatening to the project managers or the architects would be really helpful."

Despite the first round's cauldron of tensions, many of the resulting designs have been remarkable. Good architects take limitations and find great solutions. Superintendent Romer, who hosts a television show Monday nights at 8 on KLCS, has been featuring a different architect and school on the first 15 minutes of each show. When this article went to press, the status report for round one was as follows: four schools and one addition have been completed and opened. Eight projects were under construction. 34 more begin construction by December 2002. 75% of the projects have completed designs, acquired land, and have been given environmental clearance. The second round has already begun.

Leo Marmol foresees that the next round will hold one great challenge—there will be even less land available than in the first round. He believes the small sites could prove an exciting opportunity for the architects. (He should know: Marmol Radziner & Associates' Accelerated Charter School sits on the smallest of all first-round sites.) "If the architects truly are supported by the district and are able to respond aggressively as astute designers, we will see wonderful and inspiring outcomes. The remaining question is simply, will the system allow and support that creative spirit? We will see." LAUSD has just taken its midterm. The final is yet to come. ■



The Accelerated School by Marmol Radziner+Associates



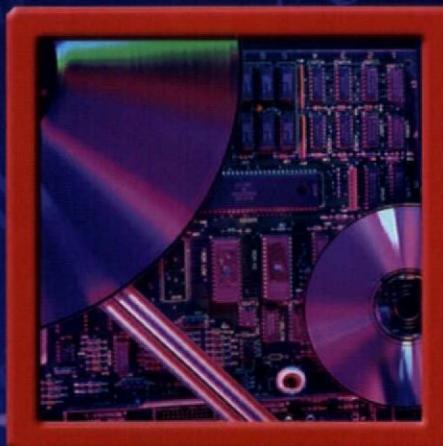
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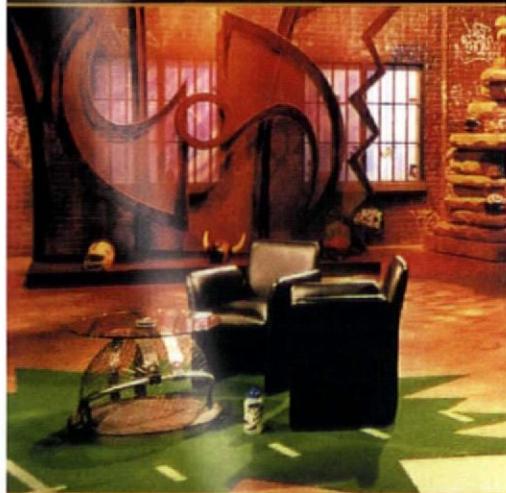
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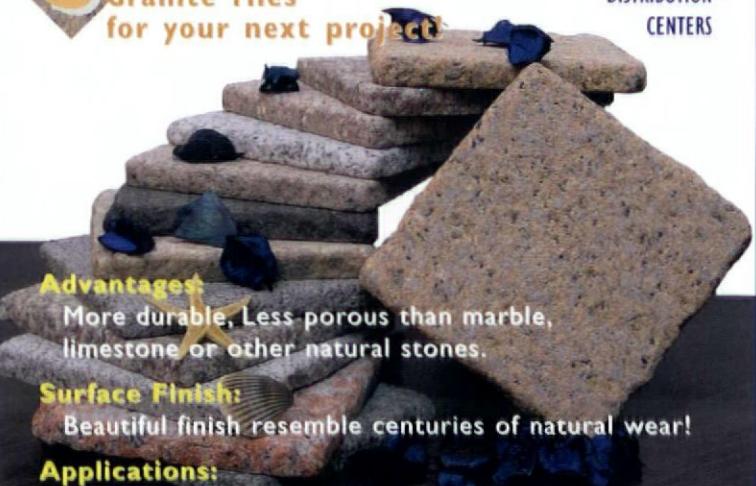
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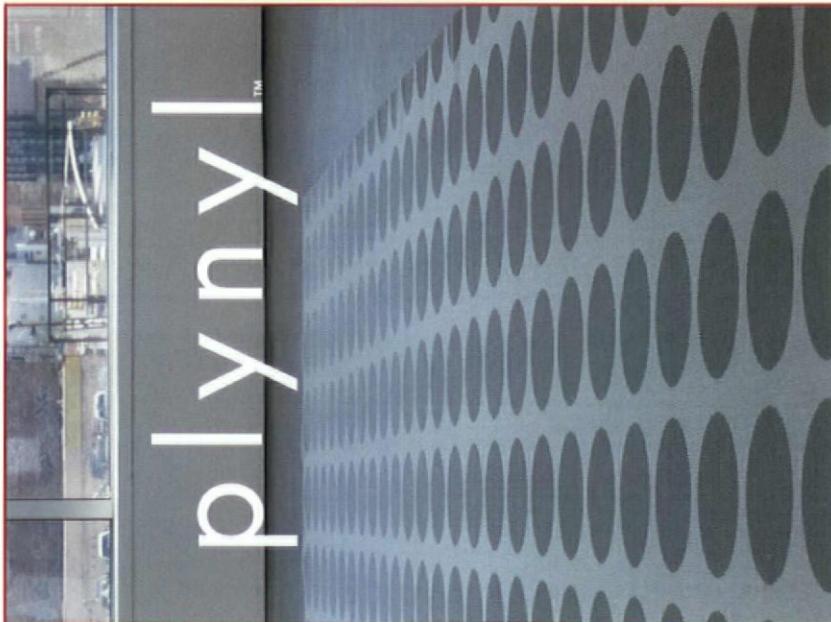
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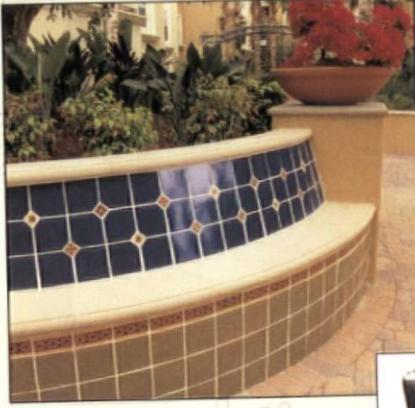
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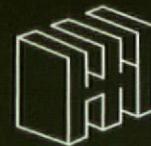
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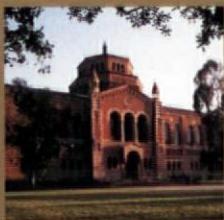
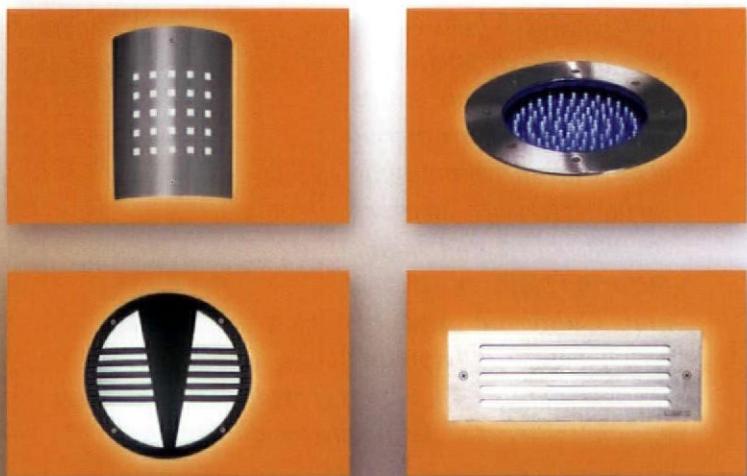
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Design Walk

ONE DAY, SITTING AT THE SITAG SHOWROOM IN DOWNTOWN LA, we began discussing how cool downtown is and how much design activity now occurs there particularly with the opening of SCI-Arc. Thinking, hey, what a great idea for some fun little open houses we concocted a low-key "design walk." How were we to know the idea would strike such a resonant chord? Jumping enthusiastically into the fray with both feet came LA/DWP and KPCC-FM and we suddenly had a tiger by the tail and a major street festival which became "Downtown LA: Where Design Hits the Road." Held on Traction Avenue May 18th, the event attracted a reported 5,000 people who took part in design related activities including tours of downtown's historic core, panel discussions, open houses at over 25 artists' lofts, great food, music, and exhibits of books and gifts among other things. The tours featured stops at the DWP headquarters for a solar power display and the A+D Museum.

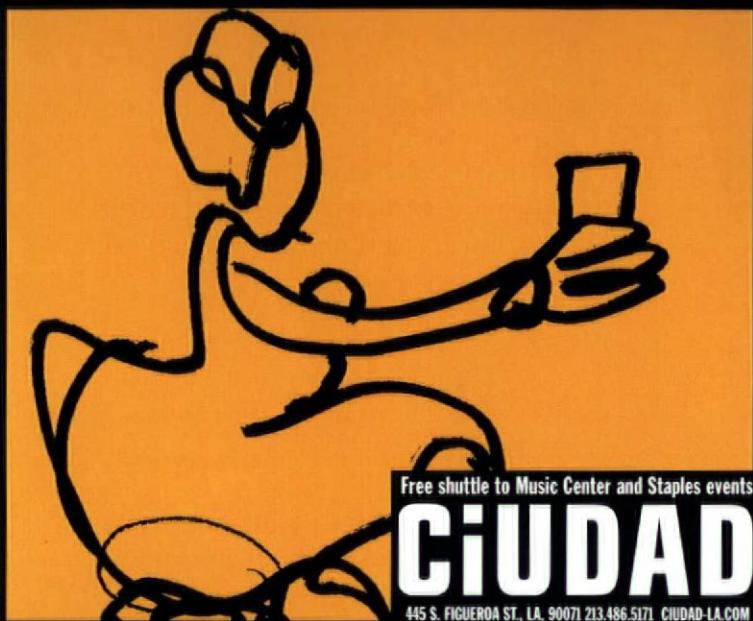
Panel discussions at SCI-Arc were organized by AIA/LA and Livable Places. Livable Places, a non-profit development and public policy organization, hosted a panel including urbanist John Kaliski, developer Ted Stein, Culver City Planning Manager Linda Tatum and moderated by architect Lawrence Scarpa to address issues of the architect's role in the development process. The AIA's panelists, Councilperson Jan Perry, LA Director of City Planning Con Howe, and architects Thom Mayne and Stefanos Polyzoides were moderated by developer Dan Rosenfeld and drew a standing-room-only crowd for their discussion of the future of downtown LA.

The event drew many old friends from the architecture community as well as the general public who were rewarded with a view of the city they rarely get. Visitor Carol Rosenberg really summed up the day in saying, "I live in Agoura Hills. I loved it. I loved the docent tours. I loved having artists graciously open their lofts. It was a wonderful experience I would never have known what Traction and Merrick Streets were all about. There is a tremendous amount of energy, creativity and bustle and I want to thank you." Jan Perry took the opportunity to pitch the neighborhood as the place to live and work.

LA Architect was privileged to work with numerous fun and generous organizations in presenting LA's first downtown design walk. The following pages in some small way acknowledge their participation. —Ann Gray

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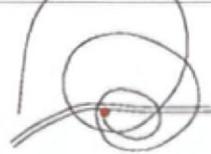
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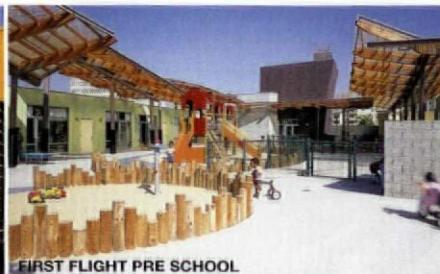
CRIT FROM THE CRIB by Allison Milionis



DIAMOND RANCH HIGH SCHOOL



CAMINO NUEVO



FIRST FLIGHT PRE SCHOOL

Architects and critics like to think that architecture plays an important role in children's education; that an enhanced architectural environment will have a profound and lasting effect on their fertile minds. But are kids aware of the architecture that surrounds them? We visited three Los Angeles-area schools and asked some kids how they like their school—not the teachers or the books—but the buildings.

DIAMOND RANCH HIGH SCHOOL

ARCHITECTS: Thom Mayne, Morphosis

Katrina 15, 11th grade
Marisol 16, 11th grade
Krystle 15, 11th grade
Emily 16, 11th grade
Jackie 13, 9th grade

What is your favorite part of the building?

Krystle: I like the gym because it's different inside and outside. Other school's walls are brown and made out of bricks or whatever. In our school the walls are white and light inside with the windows—it's different.
Marisol: Just the general building. The dimensions are so rare it gives the school originality.
Jackie: I like the fields and all the landscaping. It's really beautiful.
Emily: The coolest part is the classrooms that hang out over the edge and have the full windows as one of the walls. That's really cool.
Katrina: All the openness. We have halls, but they're not enclosed. We don't have to go through doors—no traffic!

How would you describe your school to a friend?

Emily: Some people when they first see it think it's like a prison, but it's not, it's unique.
Marisol: Insane asylum.
Katrina: It looks like an earthquake shook up the building.
Emily: Gray, not stark, just one color—monotone.

What comes to mind when you think about the building materials?

Everyone (laughs): METAL!

Does the architecture effect how you feel about coming to school?

Emily: I think it made a lot more students interested when everyone found out it was winning all these architecture awards!
Jackie: It makes me proud—I go to Diamond Ranch—yeah, I go to the crazy-looking school when other schools are all boring and plain.
Marisol: I love telling people our school is in all the movies! It's not like any other high school, especially not in Pomona Unified—we're just kind of out there everywhere.

What would you do to make the school better?

Jackie: Add color.
Marisol: No, I wouldn't add more color. I think the students add color.
Emily: More trees...
Krystle, Katrina, Marisol: Yeah, more foliage!

Does the school have a nickname?

Krystle: The Prison.
Marisol: The Insane Asylum.
Emily: Tin Can!

CAMINO NUEVO

ARCHITECTS: Daly Genik

Marcelo 10, 4th grade
Maricruz 11, 6th grade
Javier 8, 4th grade
Jesse 8, 3rd grade
Michelle 9, 5th grade
Michelle 10, 6th grade

If you were to describe your school to a friend, what words would you use?

Marcelo: I would say it's a cool school.
Michelle (10): Colorful and weird shapes.
Maricruz: Small but pretty. And the shapes, I'd never seen a school with those shapes.
Javier: It looks the same as my other school— weird...
Jesse: Exciting.
Michelle (9): Fun!

What is your favorite part of the building?

Maricruz: I like the plants.
Marcelo: The classrooms because they're clean and they have a lot of books. When I work I see the colors of yellow and gray and it makes me happy.
Javier: The playground because there is room to play.
Jesse: The classrooms are nice. Sometimes when I go outside I feel hot, when I go inside, it's cooler.

What would you do to make this building better?

Marcelo: I would take care of it and make it blue.
Javier: I'd get my friends and we would make it taller.

Maricruz: Make it bigger.

Michelle (10): More playground.
Jesse: I wouldn't change anything! And no running in the halls.

What is your building made of?

Marcelo: Hmm, Metal or something?
Javier: Metal and rocks.

FIRST FLIGHT PRE SCHOOL

ARCHITECTS: Marmol Radziner & Associates

Zakary 4
Nathan 6
Jeffrey 5
Charles 5
DJ 6

What is your favorite part of the building? Inside or outside?

D.J.: I like the climbing parts outside.
Zak: I like the playground too. And I like inside because the desks are small.
Nathan: The grass and the metal bars.
Jeffrey: We play tennis every day!

How is your building different from other buildings?

Jeffrey: It's smaller than the post office.
D.J.: There aren't any toys in other buildings.
Nathan: Sometimes we share our toys and sometimes we don't.

If you could do anything you want to this building to make it better, what would you do?

D.J.: Make it bigger!
Nathan: More playground!
Charles: I'm tired.
Jeffrey: I'm hungry.

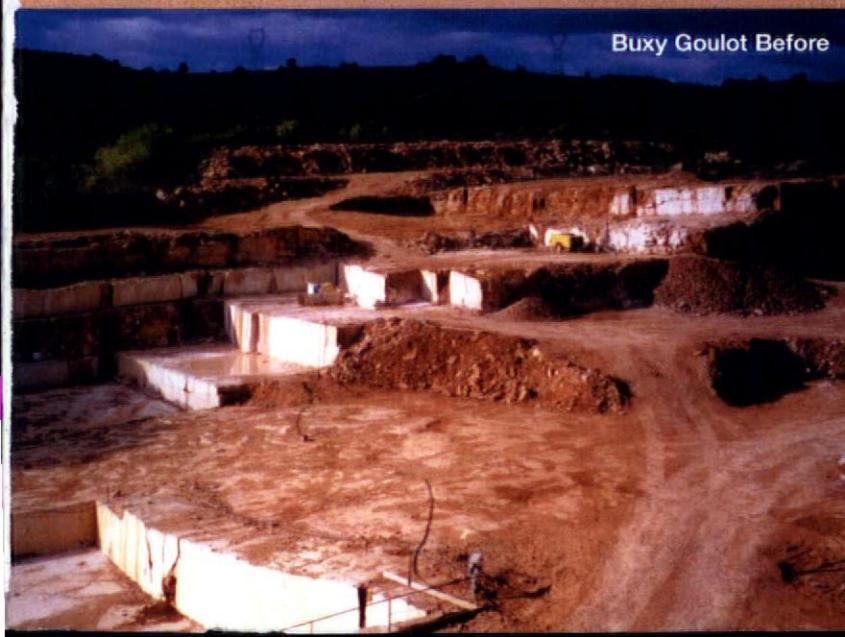
Ok guys, one last question: this building is _____.

Charles: Tall.
Jeffrey: Nice.
Zak: (no answer just popping sounds)
D.J. Cool! ☺



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